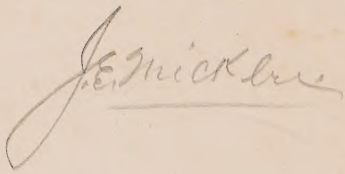
Doctrines and Polity

of the

M. E. Church, South



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THE

DOCTRINES AND POLITY

OF THE

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH.

PART FIRST

BY REV. WILBUR F. TILLETT, D.D.,

Dean of the Theological Faculty of Vanderbilt University.

PART SECOND

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PART FIRST.

THE DOCTRINES

OF THE

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH.

By Rev. Wilbur F. Tillett, D.D.,

Dean of the Theological Faculty of Vanderbilt University.

PREFATORY NOTE.

To write a brief treatise that shall cover the entire range of Christian doctrine, and yet be neither a bare and dry skeleton, on the one hand, nor a dull, superficial statement of mere commonplaces, on the other, is the difficult task that has been assigned to the author in this little volume. In trying thus to combine brevity, clearness, and completeness the author has kept constantly in mind the class of readers for whom the volume is intended—viz., Sunday school teachers, candidates for the ministry, and Bible students generally, who desire to know what are the cardinal doctrines of the Bible as it is interpreted by the great body of evangelical Christian believers.

That the doctrines of the Bible, rightly interpreted, and the doctrines of Methodism, rightly stated, are one and the same, this writer steadfastly believes, and in that faith this treatise has been written, and is now sent forth in the humble hope that it may give to those who read it a greater faith in their faith, and thus enable them the better to give to others a reason for the hope and the faith that is in them.

WILBUR F. TILLETT.

I.

Introduction.

THE DISTINGUISHING DOCTRINES AND FEATURES OF METHODIST THEOLOGY.

Methodism represents a distinct system of Christian doctrine, and also a type of Church polity. Methodists are not one the world over in their ecclesiastical polity: some are episcopal, some presbyterial, and some congregational. But all Methodists are practically a unit the world over in the type of theology which they hold. Most of the cardinal doctrines of Methodism are held in common with all evangelical Christian Churches. Such, for example, are the inspiration and divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, the Triunity of the Godhead, the divinity of Christ, the fall of man and the universal sinfulness of the race, justification by faith, the necessity of regeneration, the future and eternal existence of all men after death, and many other similar doctrines of the highest significance.

But there are certain other doctrines which, though not held exclusively by Methodists, have at least been more strongly emphasized

in the faith and preaching of Methodism than in any other branch of the Christian Church. Among these may be mentioned the following: the moral free agency and accountability of man, the unlimited atonement of Christ, the witness of the Spirit testifying to the regenerate man of his acceptance with God, the possibility of apostasy, and the attainability of entire holiness in this life.

Methodism has been the instrument in the hands of God of saving during the century and a half of its existence not less perhaps than fifteen to twenty millions of immortal souls. This result, which is without a precedent in the history of the Christian Church, is to be attributed in no small degree to the intensely earnest and practical character of its theology. "It was not new doctrine but new life that the Methodists sought for themselves and for others," says Bishop McTyeire in the opening sentence of his "History of Methodism." But the history of the Christian Church has established the fact that progress in the spiritual life and maintenance of sound doctrine are vitally related to each other.

The doctrinal system of Methodism is sometimes designated as "Arminian theology."

This designation connects it with the name of James Arminius (1560–1609), a noted theologian of Holland. As Martin Luther and his fellow-reformers, although reared in the Church of Rome, were led by their enlightened convictions to protest against what they considered the corrupt practices and false teachings of this Church, and were for that reason called Protestants, so James Arminius and his associates, although first instructed in the strict teachings of high Calvinism, felt compelled to utter a remonstrance against certain extreme Calvinistic doctrines concerning predestination, election, reprobation, etc., and were for that reason called Remonstrants. The celebrated "five points" of Calvinism, setting forth the peculiar and distinctive doctrines of that system of theology, were offset by the no less distinctive "five points" of Arminianism, viz.: (1) Conditional election—that is, God elected to salvation those who, he foresaw, would freely repent of their sins and believe in Christ, and to reprobation those whose willful impenitence and unbelief he foresaw. (2) Jesus Christ died alike for all men, but only those who repent and believe will secure the saving benefits of his atoning death. (3) The ability of fallen man to re-

pent and believe is of grace and not of nature, and spiritual renewal or regeneration is entirely of the Spirit's operation. (4) Nevertheless divine grace and the influence of the Spirit are not, as Calvinism affirms, irresistible; but may be resisted by man, who is a moral free agent, and who, though he may be convicted of sin against his will, is never converted against his will. (5) The possibility of a truly regenerated man falling away from his saved estate and being finally lost was first left an open question, but was soon decided, as the logic of the system required that it should be, in the affirmative.

The doctrinal system of Methodism is also designated as "Wesleyan theology." This designation associates it with the names of John and Charles Wesley. John Wesley (1703–1791) was perhaps the greatest reformer, preacher, and evangelist that has ever appeared in England. Methodism is but one of the many results that have come from his life and labors. John Wesley's theology was intensely evangelical and practical, and, like that of the apostle Paul, was to a large extent colored by his own religious experience. He accepted the system formulated by James Arminius and the Remonstrants of Holland, in

all the points wherein that system differed from Calvinism. But he did something more for it than accept it. Arminian theology, as it was formulated by the Remonstrants, was, as an intellectual system of doctrine, logical, self-consistent, and true; but it was cold; it was lacking in the warmth and intensity of spiritual life; it needed to be quickened by the faith and the fire of an evangelical experience. This is exactly what John Wesley did with it and for it. He carried it, as it were, to the altar, and there it was baptized with the Holy Ghost; and, surcharged with evangelical life and converting power, it was sent forth upon its world-wide mission of evangelization. In Methodism we find the doctrines of Arminius put into practice as living truths, made matters of personal religious experience, and utilized as mighty spiritual forces for saving souls and spreading the kingdom of Christ. In Wesleyan theology the intensive power of the gospel to save each individual from all sin is as much emphasized as is its extensive power to save all sinners, whoever they may be and whenever and wherever they may live.

In 1784 John Wesley reduced the thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England to

twenty-five in number, and abridged and otherwise altered some of those which he retained. These he sent to America by Thomas Coke, whom he had ordained bishop, and they were accepted as the general creed of Episcopal Methodism in America. They have ever since occupied a foremost place among our doctrinal standards.

John Wesley's sermons also have always been numbered among the leading "doctrinal standards" of Methodism. They may be lacking here and there in the accuracy and uniform self-consistency of doctrinal statement that we have a right to expect in works of dogmatic theology, but what they lack in these respects they more than gain in the spiritual power that belongs to them as sermons glowing with a living Christian experience and setting forth the great truths that pertain to man's salvation. Richard Watson's "Theological Institutes" may not be altogether up to date, but they have in them a theology that is well adapted to the world's conversion and upbuilding in the spiritual life. Adam Clarke, the first great representative commentator of Methodism, showed by his able and scholarly expositions of the Holy Scriptures how thoroughly faithful to

the Bible were the doctrinal teachings of Methodism.

Charles Wesley, the poet-preacher and theologian, rendered a service to the theology of Methodism scarcely less important and far-reaching than that of his brother John. He gave happy expression in verse to all the great doctrines of Christianity, and he was especially happy in the hymns which he wrote embodying the more distinctive doctrines of his faith. These hymns became at once immensely popular with the people, and gave wings, as it were, to the doctrines they embodied. A sermon put into a song doubles its power for good. Nor did these doctrinal hymns of Charles Wesley simply meet a local and temporary need; they have an abiding value, and have carried, in the most effective manner possible, the doctrines they contain into the hymnals of all Christian Churches the world over. While John Wesley's hymns are not numerous, and are mostly translations from other languages, they are in no way inferior to those of Charles Wesley either in poetic merit or doctrinal value. It is in portraying those doctrines which are matters of religious experience that the Wesleyan hymns are richest both in variety and in intensity of

utterance. The great reformation in Germany in the sixteenth century owed much to the fact that Luther was a poet as well as a preacher, and embodied all his leading doctrines in simple and popular hymns that were adapted to the common people as well as in sermons and theses that were adapted to the learned. But the Wesleyan reformation owed even more to its hymns. "Let me write the songs of a people," said one, "and I care not who may write their laws; I will govern them." "Let me write the hymns of a Church," said another, "and I care not who may write her creeds and ponderous volumes of theology; I will determine the faith of her membership." The Methodist hymn book has always been reckoned among the doctrinal standards of the Church. It has ever been one of the most effective of the agencies employed for indoctrinating the people in that type of evangelical Christian faith which is known the world over as Methodist theology.

But the designation of Methodist theology as "Arminian" and "Wesleyan" must not be misunderstood. Methodist theology is first of all and above all biblical. Every evangelical Church recognizes the Bible as the source and foundation of its theology. It is after

all simply a question of the proper interpretation of the Bible. Calvinism is a logical and self-consistent system of doctrine which finds its starting point and its determining principle in the eternal decrees of Jehovah, and interprets the entire revelation contained in the Bible in accordance with that doctrine. Methodism also has a logical and self-consistent system of doctrine which in like manner is based upon the Bible, but it finds its starting point and determining principle in two doctrines that mutually necessitate and support each other—viz., the moral free agency of man and the unlimited atonement of Christ; and we may say that every other doctrine of Methodist theology is a logical outcome of these two doctrines. Methodism, therefore, claims that its theology is the theology of the New Testament, the theology of Christ and of Paul. It is that simple and primitive type of theology which began to be preached in its completed form on the day of Pentecost, and has never since been without its true witnesses in any age of the Church's history. It has needed, however, to be restated and reformulated ever and anon. Such was the service rendered by James Arminius and John Wesley, and by others before and since their day.

II.

The Holy Scriptures.

What doctrine does Methodism hold concerning the Holy Scriptures? This is best answered by first asking another question: What does the Bible teach concerning itself? The Bible teaches, we answer, that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." It teaches that "prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" and that "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." Moses is represented as having received directly from God the Ten Commandments, which are with us to this day, and whose high moral character well befits their claim of a divine origin. "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying," is the preface with which the prophets begin their messages. These remarkable

claims demand of us that we make serious inquiry as to their import. If this Book is what it claims to be, no man can afford to ignore or neglect its teachings. "These [things] are written," says St. John, in concluding the fourth Gospel, and it is in a sense equally true of all Scripture, "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

These quotations cover the three main questions which we need to ask concerning the Bible, and suggest the proper answers to them: (1) Where did the Bible come from? We answer that it is divine in its origin, in that its cardinal and distinguishing doctrines were revealed by God to man. (2) How did God reveal these facts and doctrines? We answer: Through certain chosen men whom the Holy Spirit inspired as trustworthy organs for the communication of the divine will. (3) What purpose are these inspired Scriptures designed to fill in the divine economy as it concerns man? We answer: They are a divinely provided guide for man in all matters of a moral and spiritual nature, especially such as pertain to his faith and conduct here and his life in the world to come. Thus

we have the three theological terms, *revelation*, *inspiration*, and the *canon*, answering the three questions as to the *whence*, the *how*, and the *what* of the Holy Scriptures.

God reveals something of himself and of his will through nature and providence, but this general revelation has always proved inadequate to meet man's spiritual needs, being insufficient to impart a true and satisfactory knowledge of God, of the way of salvation, and of the immortality and destiny of the soul. That religious knowledge which fallen man needed but could not secure from nature, God has supplied in a supernatural manner by revelation. It is these divine or supernaturally revealed facts and truths which, as collected together within the Bible, constitute it a divine Book. Nevertheless, the Bible is not wholly divine; it is rather divine-human, for much that is contained in it is human in its origin and did not need to be divinely revealed. This unrevealed portion of the Bible is, in fact, the larger portion. It is, however, a faithful and trustworthy record, quite as much as is that portion which records the divine revelations. The human elements furnish the literary and historical framework for holding the divinely revealed truths. The divine rev-

elations contained in the Bible are of transcendent importance, and so far give character to the volume as a whole that it is common, and not inappropriate, to designate it as the Book of Revelation.

What is the evidence that the Bible contains supernatural revelations? The divine authority of the Bible depends upon the truth of the claim that it contains supernatural revelations; and if this be true, the claim ought to be supported by supernatural evidence. And it is. The prophets who claimed to have received divine revelations proved the truth of their assertions by working miracles. When Moses, for example, announced to the children of Israel in Egypt that he had received a revelation and a command from God in the desert, they immediately and very naturally demanded proof of such a claim. The God who had given the revelation had provided for this reasonable demand, and empowered him to work miracles. In some instances the vindication of the divine claim on the part of the prophet was found in the fulfillment of predictions which he uttered concerning the future. In yet other instances the revelations announced by the prophets as coming from God were self-evidencing—that is, were in

their nature so thoroughly accordant with the moral character of God and man's religious needs that they carried their own evidence in them, and hence did not need to be supported by miracles or predictions. Our reason, therefore, for believing that the Bible contains divine revelations is found in part in the miracles the prophets and the apostles wrought, in part in the fulfillment of their predictions of future events, in part in the intrinsic moral excellence of the doctrines taught, and finally in the uplifting and ennobling moral influence the Bible has had upon the character of all the nations and individuals that have believed and followed its teachings.

But the passages of Scripture which were quoted above seem to teach not only that God has made revelations of his will from time to time, but that it was his will that a trustworthy record should be made of these revelations. They imply that the Holy Spirit exercised an influence upon those who wrote the books of Holy Scripture such as cannot be claimed for the writers of any other books. This special influence of the Holy Spirit upon the minds of the biblical writers was designed to prevent them from making hurtful mistakes in the statements they should give of the great mor-

al and spiritual truths of religion, and in an important sense to make their words God's words, and their book to be God's Book. This is what is meant by saying that the biblical writers were "inspired." St. Peter speaks of a certain scripture "which the Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of David." The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews uses interchangeably the expressions "the Holy Ghost testifieth" and "one [that is, the writer] in a certain place testifieth." In other words, what the inspired writer says God says.

To affirm that the biblical writers were inspired does not mean that they lost their human individuality and freedom, and were turned into machines. The inspired prophets and apostles were not shorthand reporters. Only in a few instances do they tell us that they wrote down the very "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth." In the Ten Commandments we have the very words of God. But as a rule the expression of the thought, even when it was revealed, was determined by the individual writer, whose style and other mental peculiarities may be seen everywhere in his writings. There may be several accounts of the same events, all differing in the words used, and yet all be

equally true and accurate. The great purpose of inspiration is to secure truth in the records, not uniformity and sameness of statement. The four evangelists record very much the same events, and yet they differ both in literary style and, as a rule, in the words used; but all are equally true and equally inspired. The various books of the Bible are as genuinely human and as thoroughly marked by the individual characteristics of their human authors as if they had been written by uninspired men. To recognize the distinctly human element in the Bible is not to detract from its moral value, but rather to add to its value for man's guidance, even as the humanity of Christ makes him a better Saviour than if he had possessed no human nature at all. Truth is none the less true because uttered by human lips. Christ is none the less divine because he had a genuinely human nature.

But the strongest of all arguments in proof of the doctrine of biblical inspiration is the manner in which Christ refers to the Scriptures, and the absolute divine authority which he attributes to them. To him and to the apostles they were none other than God's own words. Our Lord made distinct reference to David's inspiration when he asks: "How then

doth David in spirit call him Lord?" If the Old Testament was written by divinely inspired men and possessed of divine authority, how much more the New, which was the full and final expression of the revealed will of God! We believe in the New Testament chiefly because of what it tells us of Christ; and in the Old Testament chiefly because of what Christ tells us of it—tells us by the way he used it and appealed to it as the very word of God. Perhaps the best possible definition which we can give of the Holy Scriptures is drawn from their relation to Christ, thus: "By the Holy Scriptures we mean, (1) those ancient sacred books of the Jewish Church which Christ and his inspired apostles used and appealed to as of divine authority; and (2) those sacred books of the New Testament which set forth the life and teachings of our Lord, and which were written by or under the direction of his apostles." Christianity believes in the Person first, and in the Book second. It is the divine-human Person that makes the Book, not the divine-human Book that makes the Person. Christianity could live without a Book, but it could not live—indeed, it could not be at all—without the Person of Christ.

The Canon of Holy Scripture, then, is nothing more nor less than that collection of sacred books which were written under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the primary object of which was to meet man's moral and religious needs. They incidentally contain history, biography, chronology, philosophy, science, etc., but they were not written primarily to teach any of these things, and the entire accuracy of their statements concerning questions of this kind is a matter of absolute insignificance as compared with the great moral principles and spiritual truths that are the distinguishing features of the Christian religion. It is in reference to these truths that we appeal to it as the divine and authoritative word of God.

The word "canon" means, literally, a rule; and the Holy Scriptures are a canon in that they are a divine rule of faith and practice, a standard of doctrine and ethics. The word "canonical" is also applied to the Holy Scriptures to distinguish them from books which were not regarded as inspired and of divine authority, such as the Old Testament Apocrypha.

There is every reason to believe that the Old Testament Scriptures, as we now have them, are substantially identical with the Scriptures

which Christ and the apostles used. These Scriptures of the old covenant are not called old because they are antiquated and obsolete; for, although the dispensation for which they were immediately written has long since come to an end, having served its purpose, these ancient Scriptures have an abiding significance and value. A large part of the Old Testament is occupied exclusively with setting forth the ritual and ceremonial law of the Jewish Church, which is not now binding and has never been since the day of Pentecost; but, so far as they embody God's moral law, they are of as much authority now as they ever were, and are of equal authority with the New Testament. Inasmuch, however, as transitory and now obsolete precepts are intermingled with those which are of perpetual obligation, the Old Testament must be read and interpreted with intelligent discrimination.

All inspired books are of importance, but some are of more importance than others. That portion of the Bible which transcends in moral value all other parts of the Bible is the four Gospels. Christianity is a historical religion. Its Founder is a Person who lived at a definite time and place, and the Gospels purport to give a trustworthy record of the leading facts

of his life, his sayings and doings. The whole question as to whether or not there is a supernatural religion in the world depends upon the historical trustworthiness of these Gospel records. If any records in the literature of the world are entitled to credence, these surely are. Paul probably wrote his Epistles many years before the Gospels were written. Four of the Pauline Epistles (Romans, First and Second Corinthians, and Galatians) are universally admitted by well-nigh all classes of theologians and critics to be genuine, and to come from about the middle of the first century. These Epistles establish the fact beyond a doubt that Christ was at that time regarded as a divine-human Being, who had died upon the cross and had risen again from the dead. These are the main facts of supernatural religion—viz., the incarnation of Christ and his resurrection from the dead. If these are true, the Gospels are fully confirmed, and the existence of a supernatural religion, with its supernatural Christ, is established. This, we saw at the outset, is the supreme and final end for which the Scriptures exist: "That ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

III.

The Doctrine of God.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." It is impossible to conceive a more appropriate sentence with which to begin the inspired Book than these simple and sublime words. No definition or explanation of what is meant by God is given. A certain knowledge of God is here presupposed. As to how mankind came by the idea of God—whether it is innate, or intuitive, or a deduction of reason, or a revelation in the first instance and thereafter transmitted to all others —on this point, concerning which there has been so much speculation among philosophers, nothing is said. While the first inspired writer assumes a knowledge of God on the part of his readers, neither he nor later writers consider that knowledge complete and perfect; for a large part of their purpose in writing, as is plainly manifest, is to reveal facts and truths concerning the nature, attributes, and activities of the Divine Being. To discover and state what the Bible has revealed concerning God is the work before us in this chapter.

The Divine Being is revealed in the Bible in

part by the names given to him. The Hebrew originals of "God" and "Jehovah" represent, respectively, the ideas of "power" and "essential being." All religions had their "gods," but only the children of Israel had their "Jehovah." This name, by which he revealed himself to the chosen people (Ex. vi. 3), was derived from the verb "to be," and probably means, "He who not only is, but who causes things to be"—that is, the Creator. When God called himself (Ex. iii. 14) the "I Am," "I Am that I Am," it was but another form of "Jehovah." This was, however, among the Jews—at least among the later Jews—the "ineffable Name." For some cause or other, which is not now known, they never uttered it or took it "between their sin-polluted lips." In reading they always substituted for it the word *Adhonai*, which is translated "Lord." This latter title is in itself a most suitable name for God, in that the Divine Being is not only a God of *power* and One who *is* and causes things *to be*, but he is also the Sovereign and "Lord" of a kingdom, a God whose dominion is over all free and rational beings.

The most significant and appropriate of all divine names it was reserved for Christ to apply to God, and that is the name of "Father."

It had been used in a figurative sense before, but Christ revealed it as his real name, the name which, more than any other and all others, represented his real character and his true relationship to man. In revealing God to us as a Father, Christ made him a lovable Being. Hitherto he had been feared and worshiped with awe, and obeyed from a stern sense of duty; but Christ made God such a One as could be loved. Christ transformed duty to God into a willing service, a labor of love to "our Father." The "Fatherhood of God," then, may be said to represent the crowning revelation of the Bible so far as it concerns the Divine Being.

The three truths concerning the God of the Bible, which from the beginning of Old Testament history were most conspicuously revealed and were emphatically and repeatedly reuttered, are his *unity*, his *spirituality*, and his *personality*. "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord," is, so to speak, the first declaration of Old Testament theology, the first article in the faith of the chosen people. The unity of God means that there is and can be but one God. To affirm the existence of many gods is virtually to deny the existence of any real and true God. Many gods means

no God. The Jews were surrounded by peoples who were polytheists—that is, worshiped many gods. But this declaration of the oneness of God does not stand alone in the Bible; it is immediately followed by other words that belong to the very same sentence: "and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." This implies that faith in the unity of God is an antecedent condition to loving God. Polytheists fear their gods, but never love them. Only those who believe in one God are capable of exercising that highest of all creaturely acts of worship—love.

But peoples who have not had the benefits of divine revelations have not only multiplied their gods; they have also materialized them. Their deities have been generally gods of wood and stone, the works of their own hands, and they that made them were like unto them. Their gods, instead of being their creators, were their creatures. The many forms of idolatry that have characterized and degraded the heathen nations of the earth have been a result of the materializing of Deity. But "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Spirit has none of the properties of matter, but has

consciousness, intelligence, moral nature, freedom, and similar attributes, none of which belong to matter. Man is both body and spirit, but that which he recognizes as his real and true self is his spirit. There could be no finite spirits if there were not an Infinite Spirit, and there could be no such thing as spiritual religion if God were not a Spirit.

But there are those who believe in the unity and spirituality of Deity, who yet do not believe that God is a person. They affirm that *everything is God*, that God is "*the all*" *of existence*. Pantheists affirm that everything is, in its ultimate analysis, but one thing, and that thing is "God." Even matter itself is but the "visible form" of Deity. But Deity is not a person, not a somebody, but a somewhat, an infinite "It" –that eternal, all-pervasive, indestructible something out of which everything visible comes and to which everything visible returns. But the Christian Scriptures affirm that God is a Person, separate and distinct from everything else in the universe. God is *He*, not It. All things in the universe were made by God out of nothing, and owe their existence to his will and his creative power. If God were not a person, there could be no such thing as personal

religion, nor could there be any true worship, or any love to God, or any sense of moral responsibility. We thus see that if there is any real and true God at all, these three things must be predicable of him: unity, spirituality, personality. Of the God of the Bible, and of him alone, can all these things be affirmed.

But God is not only "Father;" he is also "Son." The Father and Son are both alike divine. God is not only *our* Father; he is, in a unique and peculiar sense, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is revealed in the New Testament as the eternal Son of God. He speaks of the glory that he had with the Father before the world began. He claims and receives honor and worship such as can be properly given to none but God. A third person, called the Holy Spirit, who is represented as "proceeding" from the Father and as "sent" by the Son, is also represented as possessed of divine attributes and is accorded divine worship. In a certain sense the Father comes first, the Son second, and the Holy Spirit third; but these three persons are represented as alike eternal and equally divine. And yet in immediate connection with the recognition of the divine character

of these three different Persons, our Lord and the apostles repeat and emphasize what is so often asserted in the Old Testament—that there is but one God. The only mode of reconciling these apparently discordant statements is to say that God is three in one sense, and one in another sense. These different Persons share one common divine nature. The whole of Deity is in each divine Person. These truths find expression in the theological term "Trinity" or the "Triunity of the Godhead."

It is common to speak of God as possessed of certain "attributes." The attributes of a thing are those qualities or properties which inhere in the thing, and which, being predicated of it, serve to define it by distinguishing it from all other things, whether similar or dissimilar to it. A thing is never properly defined until certain attributes are predicated of it which do not, at least in their entirety, belong to anything else. Among the leading attributes which serve to define God may be mentioned these: freedom, immutability, eternity, omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience, goodness, holiness, and love.

By *freedom* we mean that attribute that belongs to a self-conscious, rational, and moral

being, by virtue of which his will possesses self-determining power, and is necessitated to put forth its volitions by nothing outside of itself, the real determining cause of his volitions and acts being in himself. God's will is itself the uncaused cause of all things. Of him alone can it be said that "He doeth according to his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth." But the infinite Divine Will created finite human wills, who possess within certain narrow limits the same kind of free and self-determining power that the Divine Will possesses without limits. God is the only one "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (Eph. i. 11.)

By the divine *immutability* we mean that God changes not. It is not the same as immobility, but is the attribute of an ever-active Being whose principles of action are absolutely uniform in their conformity to his perfect moral character. "I am Jehovah, I change not." (Mal. iii. 6.) "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thine hands: they shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold

them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." (Heb. i. 10.) Of Christ it is said that he is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."

The *eternity* of God defines his relation to time, and means that he is without beginning of days or end of years. There never was a time when he was not; there never can come a time when he will not be. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." (Ps. xc. 2.) He is described by Isaiah as the "lŏfty One that inhabiteth eternity." There is a sense in which it may be truly said that all time is an "eternal now" with God. All the events of the past and of the future enter as fully into his conscious knowledge at every moment of time as do the events of the present. But this phase of his eternity involves omniscience.

The *omnipresence* of God is a term that expresses his relation to infinite space. There is no object or point in infinite space at which he is not present at every moment. "Behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee," said Solomon truly. The ques-

tions of the psalmist, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?" and "whither shall I flee from thy presence?" suggest their own answer. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."

By the *omnipotence* of God is meant that he has power to do whatever he wills to do. Man's power is limited; God's power is unlimited. Man has to accomplish much of what he does by working upon and through other things; God's power is exercised immediately. He wills, and it is done; he speaks the word of power, and it is executed. The Scriptures tell us that "with God all things are possible." But omnipotence cannot accomplish impossibilities. Whatever is a contradiction in thought is an impossibility in execution, even to divine omnipotence. Thus God cannot, by an exercise of his omnipotence, compel *free moral* beings to be morally good and holy. If he should do this, he would destroy their free moral agency, which is the very essence of their nature.

Omniscience is that attribute by virtue of which God knows all things, past, present, and future. "His understanding is infinite." (Ps. cxlvii. 5.) "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we

have to do." (Heb. iv. 13.) "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Acts xv. 18.) That phase of the divine omniscience which is theologically the most important is the foreknowledge of God; and this because of its relation to the doctrine of election and predestination. Between divine foreknowledge and human free agency there is no contradiction, any more than there is between the present knowledge of God and man's freedom in his acts. But if God, before men were even created, chose some to salvation and others to damnation, and then predestinated them to their foreordained lot, and is now working out his eternal decrees—in other words, if it is God's will in eternity, and not man's will in time, that determines who is to be saved and who lost—then it is impossible that men should be free and responsible for their character and destiny. The divine *wisdom* is the omniscience of God as manifested in the accomplishment of the highest and best ends by the use of the simplest and most effective means. The grandest display of the wisdom of God is found in the divine method adopted for saving a lost world—by the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

By the *goodness* of God is meant that attribute of the divine Nature which seeks the well-being and happiness of all creatures. "The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord." (Ps. xxxiii. 5.) But the highest well-being and happiness of rational beings is moral and spiritual good. To secure this higher good in man it is often necessary for him to suffer physical evil. Physical evil is one of the most effective agencies employed by God to correct moral evil. It is no reflection, therefore, on the goodness of God to find that he has made a world in which there is much that mars the mere physical comfort of his creatures. He makes "all things to work together for good to them that love him."

By the *holiness* of God we mean the absence from the divine character of everything of the nature of creaturely evil, and the presence of everything that is the opposite of evil. But holiness is not simply a passive personal attribute; it is also active in that God is doing everything he can, in keeping with the laws of his kingdom and the free agency of man, to save his moral creatures from sin and secure them in holiness. Justice is but a form of holiness. It is concerned with man's relations to law and gov-

ernment, to sin and its punishment, to virtue and its reward. "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" (Ex. xv. 11.)

But *love* is that attribute that overshadows and swallows up all others. It is represented as belonging in some unique sense to the very essence of God. "God is love." (1 John iv. 8.) "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us." (1 John iv. 10.) "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.) *Grace* is that form of the divine love which contemplates man with an emphasis upon his impotence and ill desert through sin, and provides for his salvation through Christ. The grandest expression of the love of God is found in the gift of Christ.

We have enumerated here the more important divine attributes. As a matter of fact, God possesses every attribute that is conceivable as belonging to a moral and holy being, and he possesses each attribute without limit. From these facts it follows that God is an infinite and perfect Being, worthy of the adoration, worship, and love of all created beings.

IV.

The Bible Doctrine of Man.

If God is the chief object of divine revelation, man, we may say, is the principal subject of revelation. The inspired Scriptures are addressed to man and are largely about himself, his nature and needs, his duty and destiny. The Scriptures give us four views of man: first, primitive man, in his unfallen state, as God made him, innocent and pure; second, man in his fallen state, as he made himself, sinful and depraved; third, man in a state of gracious ability, as Christ made him by his redeeming work; fourth, man in a state of regeneration or restoration to the divine image, as the Holy Spirit is ready to make all those who come unto God by Christ. In this chapter we shall consider man as originally created and as fallen.

The only rational account we have of man's origin, that in Genesis, makes him to be the last and highest product of creation; and this is equally true whether the inspired narrative be explained literally or as truth taught in allegorical and symbolical form. This highest of God's earthly creatures is possessed of

two natures, physical and spiritual, in one personality. Man is allied to lower animals in his physical nature, but to the angelic world in his spirit. His material or physical nature is sometimes called flesh and sometimes body. His immaterial nature is designated sometimes as soul and sometimes as spirit. It is in man's immaterial or spiritual nature that we find the real seat of manhood. It is this spiritual nature that gives him his consciousness and reason, his intellect, sensibilities, and will, his conscience, his capacity for sin on the one hand and for holiness on the other, his capacity for the worship and service of God, his likeness to God, his divine sonship and immortality. Man is represented in the Bible as having been created in the image of God, endowed with reason and moral free agency, placed under moral laws, obedience to which results in holy character, and disobedience to which is sin and results in sinful character. His life here is probationary in that his character as formed here determines his destiny in the world to come.

The supreme purpose of God in creating man seems to have been to make possible the highest ideal of creaturely holiness and happiness. There was need in the universe of a

creature whose highest happiness would be secured by his highest holiness; and this holiness, in turn, would secure the highest glory of the Creator. The holiness of a *free* being is a higher type of holiness than any kind of holiness that might characterize a being who should be necessitated by the will of the Creator to be and do what he is and does, and the former holiness would glorify the Creator far more than the latter possibly could. The latter could glorify God only as a house does its builder, while the former would glorify him as a dutiful and obedient son does his father, a righteous citizen his ruler, or a brave soldier his leader. But in order for God to make holiness possible it was absolutely necessary for him to make sin possible. But while God made sin possible by creating free moral agents and placing them in a state of probation, he did not make sin actual. It was man, not God, who made sin actual. God, we may say, would not have made sin possible if he could have secured the highest ideal of holiness in man without such possibility. But there are some things which even omnipotence cannot do; it cannot do an impossible thing, and the creation *and probation* of a *free* being who *cannot* sin are an impossibility. But the high-

est ideal of the Creator as embodied in man, the moral free agent, would have been realized if sin had forever remained simply a possibility and had never become an actuality. That ideal has been realized in one, and only one—the Son of Man. But the first Adam was as free from sin when he came from the hands of his Creator as was the infant born of the Virgin. The first man was under no necessity to sin. He was free.

We may say, then, that while man's first estate was thus one of innocence and purity, two alternatives were before him as a moral free agent: holiness and sin. But the life and probation of the first pair had not been of long duration before, by an abuse of their moral freedom, innocence and purity gave place to sin and guilt. The history of mankind, from that time on, is the history of a fallen and sinful race. The "fall of man" is a phrase which is commonly used in theology to describe man's loss of original righteousness and his coming under the dominion of sin. The fall of Adam is regarded as the fall of the race, because of the fact that he was not only the natural head, but in such a sense the federal head and moral representative of the race, which was seminally in him, that certain con-

sequences of his sin were entailed upon them. But Adam's relation to the universal sinfulness of the race is a matter of secondary importance as compared to the undeniable fact that all men are by nature sinful and stand in need of a Saviour.

The Bible uses various expressions to define the nature of sin. The essence of sin is selfishness, setting one's own will in opposition to the will of the Creator, or willful transgression of the law of God. Sin is "enmity against God." The sinner is one who has dethroned God, the rightful ruler, from his seat of authority in the heart, and has set himself up as ruler instead, and the result is a state of internal moral anarchy. The fact that the will of the creature so often manifests its disobedience to the commands of God, by yielding to the solicitations of the fleshly or animal nature, has given rise to calling sin "the flesh" or "the carnal mind." The seat of sin, however, is in the inner spiritual man, in the heart, and not in the flesh. Outward acts are sins only in so far as they are expressions of inner volitions, dispositions, and states. "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts." If the tree is evil, its fruit must be evil. The look of the eye that comes

from lust in the heart does not need the outward act to make it sin. The decision to commit murder, or even the hate of the heart that may lead to murderous volition, makes one a murderer in the eyes of God. There are different degrees of guilt. There may be sins of culpable thoughtlessness and ignorance, sins of surprise in which one is overtaken in a fault, sins of deliberate choice and malice aforethought, sins that involve the breaking of a solemn covenant, and sins against the Holy Ghost, in which the sinner, by persistence in willful wrongdoing, passes beyond the possibility of being renewed again unto repentance, and hence beyond the possibility of pardon. (Matt. v. 28, xv. 19; 1 John iii. 4; Rom. viii. 6–8; Mark iii. 29; Heb. vi. 6.)

But sin is not only a voluntary transgression of the law of God; it is also, according to the definition of St. John, any want of conformity to that law. Sins often repeated beget a habit of sin. Sinful habits long continued in beget sinful character. Sin in the first instance always involves a consciously evil act, but the oftener a man sins the more does sin become to him the law of life, and the less does the element of consciousness enter into

his sinning. Whenever a man thus, by long-continued violations of God's law, reaches the point where conscience ceases to rebuke him for his violation of God's law—where he ceases to feel painfully the guilt of his sins, where sin has become the law of life to him, has become, as it were, the natural thing to do—then he has become possessed of a sinful character. This is sometimes called acquired depravity, as distinct from voluntary sin, or the sin of nature, as distinct from willful sin. Sinful character is the result of sinful volitions and acts, but when character is formed it becomes a predisposing cause of the volitions and acts that result—that is, a man does not come from the hand of his Creator a bad man; he becomes a bad man only as a result of his own evil volitions and evil deeds; but when he has thus become a bad man, then the reverse is true, and we may say of such a one that he does evil because he is a bad man. We thus see what willful sin is, and also its relation to moral depravity and to sinful character.

But there is such a thing as inherited depravity as well as acquired depravity. It is commonly called original sin, and may be defined as that "corruption of the nature of

every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby he is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually." That all men do from their very infancy manifest a tendency to do wrong rather than to do right; that children left to themselves as they grow up will do that which is morally wrong rather than that which is right—is one of the most undeniable of all moral facts. If the Church creeds and the biblical writers were silent about it, we still could not fail to recognize this universal sinfulness of man. As this bias to sin characterizes man from his very infancy, it may reasonably be inferred that it is inherited. Hence it is sometimes called "birth sin." Many think it unfortunate that it ever should have been called "sin" or "guilt;" think that these terms should have been reserved for willful sin. Methodists do not believe that the guilt of Adam's sin was imputed or charged to his descendants in any sense except that certain consequences of his wrongdoing (as is more or less true of every parent's wrongdoing) were entailed upon his offspring. Nor does the inheriting of a bias toward sin involve any culpability or guilt

whatever until a child arrives at an age of moral accountability and can bring the sinward tendencies of his nature under the dominion of grace, but refuses to do so. Then he may justly be held responsible and punishable for it and its consequences.

Another phrase that is used in this connection, and is much misunderstood, is "total depravity." It is a term that was coined by theologians who took a view of original sin and its effect that Methodists do not indorse. This term and also that of "original guilt" are quite consistent with the cardinal doctrines of Augustinian theology, but whenever they appear in Methodist theology (as they sometimes do) they call for definition and explanation. There is, as we have seen, both inherited and acquired depravity. We believe that a man may, by persistent, willful sin, acquire a character that is totally depraved. But the theological phrase "total depravity" refers to man's state as affected by the fall of Adam and by inherited depravity, and carries along with it the idea that all men in their natural state are totally depraved and devoid of all good. To say that sin has affected every part of man's nature (body, mind, heart, soul, spirit, etc.), that it is total, ex-

tensively considered, is undoubtedly true; but to say that all men until regenerated are totally depraved in their moral nature (a *massa perditionis*, as Augustine said), totally devoid of all good, as bad as they can possibly be—*that* is a statement not in accord with Methodist theology. Methodists believe that the atonement of Christ embraced all men in its saving benefits; and that, while men are not actually saved by it until they accept Christ by faith, yet many of its general benefits have extended to all men from the very beginning of the history of the race, and precede personal salvation. There is some good in all men, even in unregenerate human nature, which is therefore not to be regarded as totally depraved. But, while this is true, Methodist theology affirms that whatever of good is found in unregenerate men is an effect of the atonement, and therefore due not to nature but to grace. If the fallen race had been suffered to exist and propagate itself unredeemed, it would have become totally depraved, but God did not suffer it to go unredeemed. All men, as a result of the atonement, have gracious ability to meet the conditions of salvation.

V.

Christ the Redeemer.

In the preceding chapter we studied man as originally created in innocence and moral free agency, and also as fallen, in a state of sin and guilt. We desire now to study man as redeemed by Christ. Two alternatives, we may say, were before the divine mind when man fell into sin: either bring the race to an end with the first fallen pair, or else, if they are to continue to propagate themselves as fallen and depraved beings, to place them in a salvable state and provide counter forces, as it were, that will restore the moral equilibrium of the human will. God, in his infinite wisdom, adopted the latter method. This is what man's redemption by the atonement of Christ did for him. It did not place him back where he was before the fall; but it did accomplish this result, that henceforth he was regarded and dealt with as a *redeemed* fallen being. When man falls, then, God does not abandon him to sin, but in mercy provides for his salvation. This he does by the promise of a Saviour, in the person of his own Son, who in the fullness of time will become incarnate, and, by

his life, death, and resurrection, will atone for the sins of all mankind and bring such moral forces to work on man as will help to counteract the downward tendencies of his fallen nature. The virtue of this divinely provided atonement avails from the beginning, and does not wait upon the actual advent and incarnation of the Son of God before it becomes efficacious for man's salvation. A sacrificial system of worship was employed that was made symbolic and typical of the great divine-human Sacrifice that was to come, and it became, in connection with the dispensation of the law, not only a temporary channel of faith and grace to Old Testament penitents and believers, but a "schoolmaster" to prepare the world for, and lead it to, Christ the Redeemer. We thus see how man, created in moral innocence, became man fallen in moral guilt, and how man fallen became man redeemed. The study of man, then, is the study of a fallen but redeemed being.

Methodists, therefore, believe in "original grace" quite as much as they do in "original sin." When God decided to allow a fallen and sinful race to propagate itself, he decided in immediate and inseparable connection therewith to redeem that race. Hence the history

of fallen man is the history of redeemed man. When the first probation ended with Adam's fall, a new and gracious probation began with a race, fallen, it is true, but also redeemed. "Original sin is the sin of Adam's descendants as under a covenant of grace. What it would otherwise have been, we can never know." Man's gracious abilities through Christ are quite equal to his moral disabilities through the fall. The fallen state, with original sin and the accompanying benefits of Christ's atoning work, doubtless furnishes as favorable conditions for human probation and the development of creaturely holiness as did the unfallen state without the divine-human Redeemer. So much for the effects of the fall on man. And as to its bearing on God, we may say, in the light of the New Testament Scriptures, that the wisdom, goodness, holiness, and love of God are manifested far more in the redemption of fallen man than they could have been by the mere creation of one or many unfallen beings like Adam and Eve.

"'Twas great to speak a world from naught.
'Twas greater to redeem."

Christ the Redeemer holds the foremost place in the theology of Methodism and all

other evangelical Churches. In one of our articles it is said of Christ that "two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men." His sacrificial death is further defined as "the perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone." It is further said that the Heavenly Father, "of his tender mercy, did give his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world."

Methodists believe in an unlimited atonement, but they do not believe in "universalism"—that is, that all sinners are actually saved by the death of Christ. Christ has put all men in a salvable state, and has endowed all men with gracious ability to embrace the

benefits of his atoning provisions; but each man, as a moral free agent, must decide for himself whether or not he will be freely saved by grace. Christ has died for all men alike, for those who do not accept him just as much as for those who do accept him. Some perish for whom Christ died. The reason why one man is saved and another lost is not because Christ died for the one in any sense that he did not die for the other; but wholly because the one, in the exercise of his liberty, accepted the atonement and complied with its conditions, and the other did not. The limitation of the atonement, then, is the work of man, not of God. While Christ is the Saviour of all men, he is in a special sense the Saviour of those who accept him. He has paid in full, so to speak, the redemption price of all who are the slaves of sin; but no one enters upon his purchased freedom until he complies with the conditions of his Christian citizenship and fulfills those moral conditions which are the guarantee that his liberty will not be turned into license; for Christian liberty does not mean license to continue in sin.

The atonement was necessary not only to satisfy the holiness and love of the divine nature, but also to satisfy the immutable

laws of the divine government. If there is a moral Governor of the universe, there must be a moral government; and if a moral government, there must be moral laws; and if moral laws are to have any force, their violation must be punished; and if punishment is to accomplish its purpose, it must be adequate to hold in existence these four things that logically precede it and depend upon it. The governmental problem is how to save man the sinner. The sinner must either be punished or some substitute must be found to take his place in bearing the penalty, or, we may say, he must either be punished or some substitute for punishment must be found that will be compatible with the laws of moral government. If substitution be allowed, the following conditions must be met: (1) It must be voluntary; forced substitution would be unjust to the substitute. (2) The substitute must be himself innocent, and therefore free from obligation to suffer for himself. (3) If the substitute is to count for more than one individual, if he is to count as a "ransom for many," he must possess an intrinsic superiority either in nature or in official rank that will give to his person a governmental value equal to the number for whom he is substituted. (4)

Some condition must be imposed upon the sinner that will result in the transformation of his moral character; otherwise the criminal would be turned loose upon society, while the innocent would be imprisoned or put to death—and no government could stand this. (5) The principle of substitution must be applied in such a way as to deter other men from sin, and not, as would be the danger, so as to encourage them to go on in sin because they would count on substitution. If human governments could meet all these conditions, they could afford to enlarge greatly upon the principle of substitution now used to a very limited extent. But as a matter of fact they can meet none of these requirements. But the divine government meets them all. Christ is a voluntary substitute who is entirely innocent and holy himself, is possessed of a divine nature which gives infinite value to his person; and repentance and faith are such conditions precedent to the sinner's release from liability to punishment that on their fulfillment God not only pardons all past transgressions but regenerates the sinner, breaking the dominion of sin in his nature and making him a new creature in Christ Jesus. This is what is known as the

Christian doctrine of substitution or vicarious sacrifice.

The following truths are here emphasized: (1) It is the divine-human Christ who atoned for man's sins; it was the divinity of Christ that gave infinite value to the sufferings of his human nature. (2) It is said in the first quotation above that Christ suffered and died "to reconcile his Father to us," but from the language used in the last quotation we may say that the gift by the Heavenly Father of his only Son is an expression of his love and an evidence that he is himself already reconciled, and our chief work is to get sinners reconciled to God. (3) His atonement is meant to meet all kinds of sin and the sins of all men; it is absolutely unlimited in its power to save all sinners and to save them from all sin. (4) The absolute impossibility of salvation in any other way than through the atonement of Christ.

While the divine nature and all the attributes of the Triune God are exercised in redemption, there are three attributes that are especially conspicuous. The necessity for atonement is found in the holiness of God, which must forever keep itself aloof from all creaturely evil. Either the sinner must be

separated from God or else separated from his sin. The atonement makes the latter possible. The originating cause of the atonement is found in the love of God. "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Self-sacrificing love is the strongest motive power in the universe. The best expression of this love which the world affords is in the case of a father giving up his only son and sending him forth to suffer and it may be to die for others. It would cost a father much less of sacrifice to go himself than to send his son on such a mission. The inspired writers represent the gift of Christ as the greatest expression and proof of the love of the Heavenly Father that it is possible for an infinite God to give. The greatest expression of self-sacrificing love that a son can give is to leave the comforts of his home and go himself on a mission of mercy in which, to save others, he will need to suffer and die. The coming of Christ into our world to save sinners by his death was no less his own voluntary act than it was an expression of God's love. Thus the atonement is at once the

highest expression of love on the part of both God the Father and God the Son. But not only is the atonement the best possible expression of both the holiness and the love of God, it is the wisest plan that the omniscient mind of God could devise for saving lost men, guarding their free agency, and at the same time bringing to bear upon the free will the strongest possible motives to righteousness. It was the only possible method whereby God could be just and yet the justifier of the ungodly.

No doctrine of Christianity is more thoroughly supported by the uniform and abounding teachings of the New Testament writers than the doctrine of an unlimited atonement. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. . . . And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isa. liii. 5, 6.) "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix. 10.) "God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself

a ransom for all, . . . who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe." (1 Tim. ii. 3–6, iv. 10.) "That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. . . . He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." (Heb. ii. 9, vii. 25.) "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree. . . . Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." (1 Pet. ii. 24, iii. 18.) "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John ii. 2.) These passages, rightly interpreted, justify every statement that we have made above concerning the doctrine of human redemption. Many of these truths were very happily expressed by John Wesley in these familiar lines:

Lord, I believe thy precious blood,
Which, at the mercy seat of God,
Forever doth for sinners plead,
For me, e'en for my soul, was shed.

Lord, I believe were sinners more
Than sands upon the ocean shore,
Thou hast for all a ransom paid,
For all a full atonement made.

VI.

The Doctrines Pertaining to Personal Salvation.

If we say that "God the Father plans, God the Son executes, and God the Holy Spirit applies," we have a formula which states with approximate accuracy the specific work of each of the three persons of the Trinity in the great work of human redemption. The execution of the divine plan of redemption was committed to the Son, and as fulfilled it is called the atonement. The application of the atoning work of Christ to the actual salvation of men is the work of the Holy Spirit, whose gracious influences act upon and coöperate with the free will of man. It is but another method of stating the same great truth to say that the originating cause of man's salvation is the love of God, the meritorious cause is the sacrifice of Christ, the efficient cause is the power of the Holy Spirit, and the determining cause is the free will of the redeemed sinner. In this chapter we are especially concerned with the two elements last named.

Personal salvation is a result of coöperation

between God and man, between the divine and the human will. Although salvation is of God's free grace, it is none the less of man's free choice. While man cannot save himself, neither can God save him, in keeping with the revealed principles of his moral government, unless man himself chooses to fulfill the conditions of salvation. As a mere matter of power, of course the omnipotent divine will can cause the finite human will to do anything, to put forth any volition whatsoever; but such a divinely necessitated human volition could not be free, and in the matter of personal salvation man is entirely free to fulfill or not to fulfili the conditions of salvation. The Bible represents God as being without partiality and no respecter of persons. God our Saviour "will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," and is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Personal salvation and damnation, therefore, are not determined by election and nonelection in eternity, but by the free will of man. The condition of fallen man as affected by the atonement is one of gracious ability to fulfill all conditions necessary to salvation; but while his present moral ability is of grace, that

grace itself is free and not arbitrary and irresistible.

If the work of personal salvation be analyzed and separated into its various parts, it may be said to consist of the following elements: (1) Conviction of sin, which is that work of the Holy Spirit upon the conscience of the sinner by which he is awakened and made to realize his sinful and lost condition; (2) repentance, which is such godly sorrow on account of sin as leads to the forsaking of all sin and the confession of sin; (3) faith, or that belief of the mind and trust of the heart by which the penitent sinner accepts Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour; (4) justification, which is something done for us, being that act of God by which he pardons all the past sins of the penitent believer; (5) regeneration, which is something done in us, being that act of God by which he breaks the dominion of the sin of nature and creates us anew, which transformation is called the new birth and is followed by adoption into the family of God; (6) the witness of the Holy Spirit to the spirit of the regenerate believer, testifying to his pardon and adoption, and producing a divine conviction of salvation; (7) sanctification, which as commonly defined refers to that work of the

Holy Spirit, in coöperation with the regenerate spirit, which separates the soul from all sin, carrying on the work begun in regeneration, and completing it in Christian perfection.

The first six elements enumerated above constitute "conversion," as this term is popularly used.* There are three salvations spoken of in the Bible. "Repent of thy sins and believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved;" this is the first. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;" this is the second, and it is a continuous, progressive work. "He that endureth to the end shall be saved;" this is the third, and refers to final salvation at the last day. A clear knowledge of all these doctrines may not be necessary to salvation, but there can be no intelligent type of piety that is not based upon both an intellectual and an experimental knowledge of all that the Scriptures represent as necessay to salvation.

Conviction of sin is a result of the Holy Spirit's application of the preached word and

* If the term "sanctification" be used in its strictly Scriptural sense, it also is included in conversion. But the common theological use of that term refers it to a work of grace, either progressively or instantaneously wrought, subsequent to "conversion."

the divine law to the heart and conscience of a sinner, and is often irresistibly produced; but while the sinner may be convicted against his will, and in spite of efforts to the contrary, yet he is not irresistibly converted. Under conviction he is free either to resist the wooings of the Spirit or to follow the Spirit's leadings on to repentance and faith. A moral free agent is never more free than in that intense and critical moment when he is irresistibly awakened and brought to a knowledge of his true condition. It is the most critical and responsible moment in all his life; for then it is that his eternal destiny is hanging in the balance, and nothing but the will of the free agent can determine which way the scales of destiny shall be made to turn. Conviction of sin is one of the chief offices of the Holy Spirit, as Christ promised: "When he is come, he will reprove [convict] the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." (John xvi. 8.) And he began this work on the day of his coming at Pentecost: "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts ii. 37.)

Repentance and faith are man's work, the only office of the Holy Spirit here being to

graciously aid man in fulfilling these human conditions of salvation. The necessity, nature, and benefits of repentance may be shown in these words of Scripture: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke xiii. 3.) "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." (Isa. lv. 7.) Of faith it is said: "Without faith it is impossible to please God: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. xi. 6.) "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.) This means to accept Christ as a personal Saviour. Confession of sin and confession of Christ prove that repentance and faith are true. Justification and regeneration, on the other hand, are entirely God's work; with them man has nothing to do, save that he performs the conditions on which the pardon and regeneration of his soul are suspended. Justification is the pardon of sin, and is conditioned not on our good works but on our faith: "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his

faith is counted for righteousness." (Rom. iv. 5.) To the penitent the promise is: "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. xxxi. 34.) But a deeper work than this is necessary: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John iii. 3.) This is regeneration; it also is conditioned on faith: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." (John i. 12.)

In the Calvinistic system regeneration comes first; and faith, repentance, and justification follow. Faith is, according to Calvinistic theology, the first act of a regenerate soul. Regeneration, (which is confused with "effectual calling") and irresistible grace, must needs come first because the fallen human race are regarded as totally depraved, as absolutely dead in sin, to exact conditions of whom would be like demanding acts of a physically dead man as a condition of imparting life to him. If God had from all eternity unconditionally elected certain ones to salvation, and foreordained the means and the time of their efficacious call and conversion; if it were true that regeneration comes first, and faith and repentance follow, then would the preaching of the gospel to the unconverted

and the call of sinners to repentance and salvation seem to be a useless work, and the present mode of preaching the gospel and pressing the claims of the Christian religion upon the consciences of sinners could not be justified. More faithful to Scripture is that theology which teaches that man, though fallen, and in a sense morally dead, is yet recognized as a living and responsible moral agent, endowed graciously with ability to seek and obtain salvation through divinely appointed conditions (repentance of sin and faith in Christ), on the fulfillment of which God graciously pardons all his past transgressions, and so transforms his sinful moral nature as to deliver him from the dominion of sin and make him a new creature in Christ. It is of the greatest importance that we have true scriptural views concerning the doctrines of personal salvation. We should make no mistake in answering the question of the awakened sinner: "What must I do to be saved?"

It may be asked why personal salvation on God's part consists of both justification and regeneration. Why would not justification alone or regeneration alone suffice to make complete the salvation of a soul? The answer is not far to seek. It is because there

are two kinds of sins—actual sin, or voluntary transgression of the law of God; and the sin of nature, which consists of both original sin and the reflex influence on moral character of repeated acts of sin, From both of these kinds of sin man needs to be saved. Justification, or pardon, concerns actual sin alone, and has nothing to do with the sin of nature; and so repentance also is of actual sins, and not of original sin. Regeneration, on the other hand, has to do exclusively with the sin of nature—original sin and the *habitus* of sin, or hereditary and acquired depravity. A tendency toward disease (consumption, for example) may be inherited, or it may be superinduced by acts of imprudence or by sickness, or it may be both inherited and superinduced; and if so, the two tendencies run together and become one. And so it is with fallen man: he inherits a bias toward sin; and this is strengthened by the effects of actual sin, both alike calling for that divine act which is designated as regeneration. If man were simply justified, and not at the same time regenerated, his past sins would be pardoned; but he would be left under the dominion of his sinful nature, and would necessarily continue to sin. Hence regeneration is rep-

resented as "breaking the dominion of sin," "cleansing the moral nature," "being born again," "created anew." Acts of sin may be compared to the black characters written upon a sheet of paper; the sin of nature, to discoloring elements that enter into the very fiber of the paper itself. The blotting out of sins (Acts iii. 19) is the pardon of all actual transgressions, but another and different act is required to cleanse and purify the sin-polluted nature of man. Justification and regeneration always take place at the same time.

Conviction of sin is the witness of the Spirit to the sinner's true condition, and so the witness of the Spirit to the regenerate believer may be called conviction of salvation. It is thus that the Holy Spirit both begins and crowns the work of personal salvation. The soul that undergoes all these experiences is a genuine and a happy convert, and nothing less than an experience of all these elements of personal salvation entitles one either to receive from God, as a sacred seal to his salvation, the witness of adoption and the assurance of sonship, or to be regarded by man as a new creature in Christ Jesus. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom.

viii. 16.) "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." (1 John v. 10.) But what the child of God is conscious of is not "the witness of the Spirit," but the fact of being saved. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to convince him of this fact. But this blessed assurance that belongs by right to every child of God should not be confused with a certain ebullition of joy that sometimes accompanies certain "happy conversions." The latter is a thing of temperament; some have it and some do not; moreover, it "comes and goes." But the true witness of the Spirit is not a thing of temperament, it does not "come and go;" but is a birthright to be claimed by every child of God, no matter what his temperament.

"Quit your meanness, and be saved," may pass for a "short method of salvation" and "religion made easy," and may be followed by shaking the preacher's hand and joining the Church; but it is not the full and complete salvation from sin that is described in the Bible. Conviction of sin, repentance, faith, justification, regeneration, the witness of the Spirit—all these are necessary to make a genuine Bible Christian. Nor have we any right to make personal salvation any simpler

or easier than the Bible makes it. When conversion is based upon an intelligent understanding and a genuine experience of all these elements of salvation, then, and then only, does it mean experimental religion and impart spiritual power. Nor should we recognize any conscious sin as compatible with the regenerate state except to be abhorred and forsaken, pardoned and cleansed, as soon as it is seen by the child of God. This ideal of holiness and freedom from sin is the birthright privilege and duty of every child of God from the very moment of his regeneration; and we must not lower God's high standard to make it fit man's shortcomings.

Great as is the work above described in the salvation of a soul, it is not all that is to be done; indeed, it is nothing more than entrance upon the Christian life. And the Christian life does not consist in merely retaining what has been thus attained. The victory over sin has not yet been fully and finally won; the first great battle has been successfully fought, and the long warfare has begun. All sin "in sight" was given up at and in "conversion;" but other sin will presently come in sight as the Christian advances and his spiritual vision grows clearer. And all holiness and love

and duty in sight were welcomed, and assumed according to the degree of knowledge and faith then possessed; but knowledge and faith will increase, and soon it will appear that if the character attained in justification and regeneration was regarded as "perfection," it was a very imperfect perfection. Sinlessness, entire holiness, the perfect life—that is the ever-advancing goal that is ahead of the regenerate child of God.

Christian perfection is the name given to this doctrine which holds a place of highest honor in Methodist theology. Perfection is a term which the Scriptures use in describing the ideal religious experience and character which has been made possible by divine grace. Methodism, taking the term from the Bible, teaches that it is not only a possibility and a privilege, but the duty of every child of God to attain unto that type of Christian experience and character, and to lead that life that may be fitly described by the term "Christian perfection." As to what is to be accomplished progressively and what instantaneously, and whether or not Christian perfection is a thing to be "professed"—these are points of secondary importance about which Methodists do now differ, and always have differed.

VII.

The Doctrine of the Future Life.

It was a saying of one of the early Methodists that "man's chief business in this world is to get successfully out of it." That was but another way of stating a truth so often uttered, in one form or another, by our Lord—that the life that begins at death is the one with reference to which we should constantly live in this world. "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" But this view of the life to come—that it is the full and final realization of the divine purpose concerning man—instead of making this life of little importance, tends, on the contrary, to invest it with the utmost possible importance, seeing that it makes this life a probation in which man is charged with the responsibility of deciding by his conduct here what is to be his destiny in the world to come. The crowning attribute of man as a creature of God is his moral free agency, and this is true only because this life

is probationary and preparatory to that life which is to come.

Eschatology is that department of Christian theology that treats of those events which will transpire in the last days. Events that are signals or forerunners of the end of the world, as well as events that accompany and follow it, come under this head. The one conspicuous event that will itself determine the end of the world is the second coming of Christ. Among the notable events which are associated with the end of the world are the following:

(1) *The gospel will be preached throughout the entire world:* extensively it will have reached all parts of the earth before the end will come, though, as to its intensive effects, there will doubtless always be some people who have not come under its gracious influences. (Matt. xxiv. 14.)

(2) *The Jews will be brought in* before the end comes. This does not probably refer to an actual restoration of the entire Jewish race to Palestine, as some hold, but rather to the conversion of the Jews as a race to Christianity. (Rom. xi. 15, 25.)

(3) *The millennium* will be a period of a thousand years of such peace and prosperity to the Church that Christ is described as then

reigning upon the earth in some unique and significant manner not true of other periods. (Rev. xx. 1–9.)

(4) *The coming of* "*Antichrist*," or the "Man of sin," who will be the enemy of God and man, and who will, it seems, embody both civil and ecclesiastical power, and be the leader in a serious and widespread apostasy from the faith. (Matt. xxiv. 21; 2 Thess. i. 8.)

(5) *Christ's second coming* in visible form is the most important event that shall precede the end of the world. "Premillenarians" say that this second coming will take place at the beginning of the millennium, and that the millennium will consist chiefly in his visible and personal reign upon the earth for a thousand years. "Postmillenarians" believe that Christ's second coming will take place at the end of the millennium, and hence describe his reign during the millennium as moral and spiritual, and not in actual and visible person. They interpret the millennium as a period of indefinite length. Christ taught the certainty of the fact of his second coming, but with equal clearness the uncertainty of the time of his coming. (Mark xiii. 32; Acts i. 11; 2 Thess. i. 7.)

(6) The second coming of Christ will be

followed, according to the last, or postmillenarian, view (which has most generally prevailed in the Church), by *the resurrection of all men from the dead.* This resurrection will embrace the physical body, whose identity will be preserved. It is a fact that the human body changes *in toto* once every seven years, and yet identity of physical person is preserved in spite of these numerous and total changes in substance. If God does this in nature, why should it be thought a thing incredible that he should in the resurrection reproduce the same body, even though there be no particle of matter in the resurrection body that was originally in the earthy body which was buried and soon thereafter disintegrated and absorbed in surrounding nature? The resurrection body of the saints, it is stated, shall be made glorious, like unto the resurrection body of the Lord Jesus. But although it is our mortal and physical body that is represented as being raised, the new resurrection body is sometimes described as a "spiritual body," and certain it is that the attributes of the resurrection body that is described in the Scriptures belong much more properly to what we conceive spirits to be than to what we know material bodies to be. (Isa. xxvi.

19; Dan. xii. 2; Luke xx. 37; John v. 28, 29; Rom. viii. 11; 1 Cor. xv. 44; Phil. iii. 21.)

(7) What is called *the intermediate or disembodied state* that begins with the death of the body will end at the resurrection, when the long-separated spirits are reunited to their resurrection bodies. The intermediate state is not a state of unconsciousness, or "soul sleep," as some affirm, but a state of conscious misery for the wicked and of conscious happiness for the good. (Luke xvi. 22, xxiii. 43; 2 Cor. v. 8.)

(8) The general resurrection will be followed by *the day of final judgment*, in which all men will be judged, the wicked being separated from the good as a shepherd doth separate the goats from the sheep. This general and final judgment will simply confirm the sentence pronounced upon both the wicked and the good at death. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in this body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (Matt. xxv. 32; Acts xvii. 31; Rom. ii. 16.)

(9) *The future lot of the wicked* is repre-

sented as one of unrelieved and unending misery. This misery does not consist so much in sufferings externally inflicted as in the pangs and torment of a guilty conscience. And if it be true that the misery of the lost grows thus out of evil character rather than out of mere external environment, it follows that misery is proportioned to guilt. But the misery and punishment of no lost soul, not even the worst in hell, will be one iota more in severity than that soul justly deserves. God, who is both omniscient and infinitely just, is the supreme and final arbiter in this matter. And it is worth our while to bear in mind that the most awful words ever uttered concerning the doom of the incorrigibly wicked and finally impenitent in the life to come came not from Moses the lawgiver amid the thunders of Sinai, nor from Jeremiah, the stern prophet of old, nor from John the Baptist, nor from Paul; but from the Son of Man, whose gospel was one of tenderness and love. We need to remember that, while it is truly said that "God is love," it is also said that "God is a consuming fire" to wicked and impenitent sinners. (Matt. xxv. 34, 46; Luke xvi. 25; 2 Thess. i. 9; Rev. xx. 10–14.)

(10) *The future lot of the righteous* is repre-

sented as one of full and unending happiness. The happiness of heaven grows not primarily out of the place, out of mere external environment, but out of character, and therefore differs in degree for different individuals, being proportioned to the capacity of each soul to extract happiness out of the place that is prepared for God's children. If the Christian doctrine of the future life be true, this life of probation is a training school for heaven, and the object of life is the development, by grace and love, by service and sacrifice, of a holy character, which constitutes a moral capacity for extracting happiness out of heaven. The saints in heaven will not be rewarded on the ground of their good works, as if they were meritorious, but it has pleased God that they shall be rewarded "according to their good works." All souls in heaven will be holy, and therefore happy; but some develop more of holiness in this life than others; and therefore, as "one star differeth from another star in glory," so some souls will be happier than others in heaven. As spiritual growth is the great law of spiritual life in this world, so the heavenly life will doubtless be one of ever-increasing growth in holiness, and hence of ever-increasing happiness. The more of holi-

ness, the more will there be of happiness. (Matt. xxv. 34, 46; John xiv. 2; 2 Cor. v. 10.)

Most of these subjects embraced in Christian eschatology have been made the subject of endless speculation. It is a department of theology which has a great fascination for a certain class of minds. While everything belonging to Christian revelation is of importance, yet it is plain that some doctrines are far more important than others, and this because they are more vital and practical. The truths whose vital importance transcends all others in this department of doctrine are the immortality of the soul and the fact that man's destiny in the future and eternal life is determined by his free conduct in this life. To the consideration of these truths we shall therefore devote our attention mainly.

While the doctrine of a future life is contained in the Old Testament, yet much less stress is laid upon it there than is done in the New Testament. With the children of Israel "transitory promises" that pertain to this life had relatively more weight and influence than with New Testament believers generally, who have been trained in the school of Christ. St. Paul tells us that Christ "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

The existence of the soul after death is not only assumed in the New Testament; it is everywhere taught and everywhere emphasized. Hence, in this department of Christian theology more than in any other, we are under the necessity of confining ourselves almost entirely to the revelations contained in the New Testament.

The Bible teaches that this life is the seed-time and the life to come is the harvest. We shall reap in the future life the fruit of our seed-sowing in this life. The law of sowing and reaping is this: we must reap what we sow, and we reap more than we sow. This law pervades the moral and spiritual world no less than it does the physical and intellectual. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." While it is true that every man is constantly reaping in this life the fruit of his sowing in former years, yet the largest harvest that he will reap is that which awaits him in the world to come.

Men will be judged by the deeds done in the body. For every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the

day of judgment; according as their words and deeds shall be, they will be either justified or condemned. While it is repentance and faith that are the conditions of salvation in the first instance, and while it is possible for one to repent even on his deathbed and be saved, through the great mercy of God, yet it is life and works and character that determine salvation at the day of judgment. Repentance and faith are the moral conditions that make possible the attainment of that life and character which are the conditions of salvation in that day when the secrets of all hearts and the real characters of all men will be revealed.

The uniform teachings of the Bible are to the effect that death ends probation in the ordinary sense of that term. We read of no second probation after death. As the tree falls, so it shall lie. He that is then unjust, let him be unjust still; he that is then holy, let him be holy still. Our Lord speaks of a sin that is forgiven neither in this world nor in the world to come. Some have tried to draw from this utterance the inference that all sins except this "sin against the Holy Ghost" may be forgiven in the world to come, and that therefore probation is continued after death. But this inference is unwarranted.

Our Lord's words, rightly interpreted, mean that while it is true of all sins that they have no forgiveness in the world to come, here is a sin that is so serious and culpable that it places the transgressor, while yet in this life, beyond the possibility of his ever being brought to repentance and saving faith, and hence beyond the possibility of pardon. The reason why any one becomes a sinner or continues to be a sinner is always in himself, and not in God. God will do nothing, either in this world or the world to come, to keep a sinner from repenting and giving up his sin. But it would be wholly unwarrantable to draw from this fact the inference that therefore lost sinners can and will repent in the world to come.

Paul tells us that Christ not only brought life and immortality to light, but that he "abolished death." This does not mean that when Christ came physical death ceased, or will ever cease till the end of the world. But it does mean that he totally transformed the doctrine of death. Instead of its being the cessation of conscious life, as many believed, or the descent of the soul into an "underworld," into a shadowy, semi-conscious, and unhappy state of existence, as others thought—and hence a thing to be feared and dreaded in either view—

Christ taught that to all who live rightly in this present world death is the end of all that can make existence in any way unhappy, and the beginning of that state where nothing can mar the highest happiness of which the soul is capable. To the Christian, to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord and to enjoy uninterrupted fellowship with Him. Many figurative expressions are used to describe what death is to those who are found in Christ. To those who are weary with the labors and sufferings of life it is described as "rest for the weary" and "sleep in Jesus." Job says: "I will wait till my change come." The tiny worm that spends its brief existence within a few square yards of earth, and feeds on dust and bark and leaves, presently "dies" as to his present state of existence; but what is death to him but his translation into the beautiful insect that basks in the sunlight, flies at will in the glad air as its home, and feeds upon the perfume of the flowers? To the soul tabernacling in a suffering body, who waits patiently until his "change" comes, death is that which transforms him who is a "worm of the dust" into a glorified spirit which bounds away into the glad freedom of the sinless and heavenly life.

To Paul death was simply the occasion of his "departure" into another life, his emigration to another and better country. If this doctrine of death be true, then did Christ bring to them "who through fear of death had all their lifetime been subject to bondage" the abolition of death and the light of life and immortality.

But while death is all this and more to those "in Christ," it is, nevertheless, likewise true that to all who are found out of Christ at death this "change," or "departure," is one that introduces them into a state far more awful than that of nonexistence, and into a place more to be dreaded than a vague and shadowy underworld of semi-conscious and burdensome existence. Since Christ came death has had a new meaning to the sinner as well as to the saint. If for the latter it is virtually abolished, for the sinner it is made the gateway to a life that is described as the "second death."

These are the truths concerning the future life that Methodism has always taught and emphasized. That theology can alone be successful, either in calling sinners to repentance or in comforting saints, which gives no uncertain sound in its teachings concerning the life to come.

VIII.

The Doctrine of the Church.

Our Thirteenth Article of Religion contains the following definition of the Christian Church: "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."

This excellent definition suggests: (1) The relation of the Church to Christ, its divine Founder, whose "ordinances" are its laws. (2) The Church is *organized Christianity*, not an aggregation of detached and unrelated units, but a visible "congregation" or collection of men bound together by a common relation to Christ and to each other, and organized for the accomplishment of a definite purpose in the world. (3) It is composed of "faithful men" —that is, men who possess both faith in Christ and fidelity to Christ, to secure which type of character in its membership proper conditions of admission to the Church and a proper discipline over those in the Church must be enforced. (4) The first function of the

Church is the teaching or preaching of the word, which must be committed mainly, though not exclusively, to those especially charged therewith and trained therefor—that is, the Christian ministry. (5) The sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper, are to be duly administered. (6) There are some things which "of necessity are requisite" to the Church and its sacraments, and other things which are not of necessity required—in other words, essentials and nonessentials in religion. In the former there must be unity; in the latter there may be liberty.

While it is most common to designate the Church as the Church of Christ, it is none the less appropriately called the Church of God and the Church of the Holy Spirit. It is the Church of the Triune God. It is first of all called "the church of God" (Acts xx. 28) or the "household of God" (Eph. ii. 19). As such it has existed from the beginning, and is, in a sense, one in all ages. From the beginning of time there have always been true believers in God, and these have constituted the true Church.

The Church is most frequently and appropriately designated as the Church of Christ, because it is founded upon his divine-human

person and work, upon his life and teaching, upon his atoning death and resurrection, upon his session at the right-hand of the Father, and his intercession for the saints. The new order of things which Christ came to establish, he usually designates as his kingdom, the "kingdom of God," or the "kingdom of heaven." Only twice does he use the word "Church" (*ekklesia*), the one case referring to a local assembly of Christian people (Matt. xviii. 17), and the other being the classic passage in which he refers to the visible organization of Christian believers for all time, and announces the faith, the foundation, and the perpetuity of the Church: "He saith unto them [his disciples], But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. xvi. 15–18.) When Christ said to Peter, "Upon *this rock* I will build my church," he probably referred to St. Peter's confession, "Thou

art the Christ, the Son of the living God;" the one great truth contained in which—viz., the divinity of Christ—is the true rock of faith upon which the Church is built. Some think that Christ referred to himself as "this rock;" others, that he referred to St. Peter as a representative of the apostles, whose work and inspired teachings were, in an important sense, to constitute the foundation of the Church.

The Church, again, is the Church of the Holy Spirit. The beginning of the Christian Church as a visible organization took place on the day of Pentecost. For this beginning Christ's work is shown by the Gospel records to have been preparatory. Not until our Lord's revelation concerning the nature of his spiritual kingdom was complete, and not until his atoning death and resurrection were become historical facts, had the time come for the historical beginning and foundation of the Church. The Church is the organ which the Spirit uses for the accomplishment of his work in the world. The Spirit can and does work under any outward form of Church government. That is the truest Church that can furnish, in the number of souls saved through its agency, the most indubitable and

abiding evidence of possessing this supreme credential: the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

The visible Church, in the widest sense of that term, includes all Churches and all members in all Churches who acknowledge Jesus Christ as their Head and trust in him and him alone for salvation. These constitute but one spiritual body, as viewed by Christ the Head. The true scriptural unity is not so much one of outward form as of inward life; it is a unity based on a true confession of faith in one God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is entirely consistent with this idea of scriptural unity that there should be many religious denominations within the Church of Christ.

There is a distinction to be made between the outward and visible Church, which is composed of all professing Christians, and the true spiritual and invisible Church, which is composed only of real and true Christians. While the visible Church will always contain in its membership some who are not in the invisible and spiritual kingdom of Christ, yet an effort should be made to make the two correspond as nearly as possible. The Church of the New Testament is composed of the

saved: "The Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved." (Acts ii. 47.) Before any one is admitted to full membership in the Church, he should give evidence not only of his sincere "desire to flee the wrath to come and to be saved from his sins," but also of "the genuineness of his faith;" in other words, he should give credible evidence of having exercised such repentance and faith as are laid down in the New Testament as the conditions of salvation. This will secure, approximately at least, a membership of truly converted people. If these scriptural conditions of salvation be required as the conditions of admission to the Church, and discipline be duly enforced, then will the visible Church be made as pure and spiritual as is possible here on earth, and then only will the Church be a "congregation of faithful men."

The Christian ministry is a divine vocation in that only those may enter it who are divinely called thereto. We believe that the Holy Spirit chooses those whom he would have to preach, and indicates his choice of them by making an inward impression upon their minds as to their duty in this regard. But the Church also must sit in judgment on those who feel called to preach, and thus "try

the spirits to see whether they be of God or not." The Christian ministry, as its name indicates, is first of all an office of service. Ministers are servants of Christ and of the Church. The most important function of the ministry is to preach the word. The salvation of sinners and the edification of believers depend upon their fidelity to this part of their work. If the "pure word of God" is to be preached, the ministry must be educated in a right understanding and interpretation of the Bible; otherwise false and fanatical doctrines may be drawn from the word of God by misinterpretation and unsound exegesis.

Methodism recognizes but two institutions of the Church as sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The Church retains the primitive and apostolic custom of baptizing infants. While it is the rule that the children only of Christian parents (or guardians) are presented for baptism, yet the Church teaches that the right of a child to Christian baptism grows out of his own relation to Christ, rather than that of his parent or guardian. As to the mode of baptism, Methodism favors pouring or sprinkling as more simple and symbolic of the "washing of regeneration," but allows perfect liberty on the part of adult

applicants for Church membership to choose either of these modes or immersion. The Lord's Supper is regarded as a memorial service and a means of grace of more than ordinary sanctity. It is the privilege and duty of every member of the Church to partake regularly of this sacrament as opportunity offers.

If our doctrine of the Church be true, every branch of the Christian Church is free to determine its own polity or form of government. The value of each can be tested only by time and experience. The polity of Methodism has been on trial for about a century and a half; and that of Episcopal Methodism for a little over a century, during which time it has been constantly undergoing modifications and adaptations to new conditions as its growth and ever-widening mission seemed to demand. Judged by its history in the past and its efficiency and rapid growth at the present time, it is doubtful whether any branch of the Christian Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has ever devised a more scriptural and efficient form of government than that of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. It behooves every student of Christian doctrines to give it a careful examination.

PART SECOND.

THE POLITY

OF THE

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH.

By Rev. James Atkins, D.D.,

Sunday School Editor.

PREFACE.

In entitling the following pages "The Polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South," it is not meant that they contain anything like a full discussion of our economy. Such a presentation would involve a full exhibit of the *rationale* of our Discipline, and even more.

The object has been to set forth the more prominent features of our Church organization and plan of working, and to call the attention of our teachers to certain vital peculiarities of our system, upon which its continued and enlarged usefulness depends. If this much shall be accomplished by this brief survey, the end aimed at will have been reached.

James Atkins.

I.

The General Rules.

The Church of Christ is an aristocracy of virtue. It is the only one which has seriously and successfully battled for a place among men. Truly it is a kingdom of grace, but the only end of that grace is holiness of character and life. Tender and all-giving as Jesus was in his attitude toward penitent men, nothing can exceed his burning candor in laying down the conditions of discipleship. These conditions would be indeed harsh if the power of execution were not furnished from above. But by the divine reënforcement all things are possible, and most moral achievements easy, to men who believe. A life of self-denial is the natural order for one in whom the supreme act and purpose of self-abnegation have gone before, and a life of heroic moral doings is easy to a man who is moved upon by the Spirit of God.

The moral code of Methodism is contained in what are called the General Rules. These rules have thrown their gracious, helpful dominion over many millions who in these more than one hundred and fifty years of our his-

tory have gone from the self-denials and labors of this life into the rewards of another. There are now about seven millions within the Methodist fold who are confessedly walking by the same rules.

The only condition required of those who seek membership in our Church is "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins."

This surely is broad enough, and yet when interpreted in the light of the Rules it leaves nothing to be added. It certainly excludes all who have a desire to flee from the wrath to come and to be saved *in* their sins.

Those who have this desire to be saved from wrath and sin will, if the desire be genuine, give evidence of it in three ways:

First, by doing no harm—that is, avoiding evil of every kind.

Secondly, by doing good to both the bodies and souls of men.

Thirdly, by attending upon the ordinances of God.

The Things Forbidden.

Taking the name of God in vain.

This includes:

(1) Profane swearing and all forms of curs-

ing, especially such as involve the prerogatives of the Deity. There is much sinful swearing which does not contain the name of God, but implies it. He who curses his fellow-man, with or without the mention of God's name, assumes a place of judgment which belongs to God only.

(2) Perjury, or intentionally false swearing, in which God is called to witness to the truth of what is false. This indicates the utmost baseness of character, and the penalties of the civil law against it are justly severe.

(3) All sacrilegious and other vain or light uses of the name of God.

(4) All idle swearing, which long ago Chaucer pronounced a "crudeness," and which is now, and must ever remain at the least, an act of incivility, and lead the way to more serious and more hurtful forms of the offense.

The name of God stands for his character, and therefore the breaking of the third commandment is one of the most dangerous and debasing of sins.

Profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein, or by buying or selling.

The three great doctrines taught by the Sabbath as we now have it are:

(1) That God is the Creator of all things; (2) that Christ is risen from the dead; and (3) that all our time belongs to God.

"The Sabbath, in its spiritual aspect and meaning, is one of the strongest defenses of the inspiration of the Bible and of the divinity of the religion which it reveals. It is man's day and God's day; more thoroughly man's day because completely God's day. It is their united time, time of fellowship, hour of communion, opportunity for deeper reading, larger prayer, and diviner consecration." (Joseph Parker.)

Christianity has no more important institution than the Holy Sabbath. It would be difficult to overestimate the value of the day both to individuals and to communities. The demand for it is laid in the physical constitution of man and the laboring animals. Not only was the Sabbath made for man, but man was made with reference to a Sabbath, so that in this regard, as well as in other things, it is to the best interests of man in his present state to obey God's commands. Such a rest is necessary to the highest sanity of the individual and the community, and hence it is

that the Sabbath is one of the greatest safeguards of personal and national life. It therefore becomes the duty not only of every true religionist and philanthropist, but of every true patriot, to advance by all means a proper keeping of the Sabbath day.

It will be noted that in the divine institution of the Sabbath it was made a day of rest, not of recreation. One of the worst evils of modern times is the habit of using the Sabbath as a day of recreation, and even of dissipation. It behooves all the teaching agencies of Christendom to set themselves against this pernicious drift by teaching in the home, the day school, the Sunday school, and the church how rightly to use the holy Sabbath.

Jesus said that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath; and in saying this he was breaking from off the Sabbath those burdensome conditions which the traditions of the Jews had placed upon it. The divine Sabbath had been so obscured by them as to be wholly lost sight of. The religious teachers who were objecting to Christ's use of the Sabbath for works of mercy were teaching the people that a man should not wear shoes with tacks in them on the Sabbath,

lest the grass should be thereby crushed, and thus amount to a sort of mowing; and that a tailor should not place a needle in his coat late in the day before the Sabbath, lest he should forget and leave it there, and thus bear a burden on the Sabbath day. These are but samples of much foolishness which was in vogue in that day, and which perverted God's day so as to make it a burden instead of a blessing. Now Christ, instead of abrogating the Sabbath or implying that it was to be used for recreation, was but restoring it to its original place as a day of rest and religious improvement.

It seems that there were in the days of Isaiah some who took the recreation view of the Sabbath, and the words of the greatest of the old prophets are sufficient to fully cover the case now. God, speaking through him, says: "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of

Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." (Isa. lviii. 13, 14.)

Let it be noted that the command to work on the other six days is as explicit and as binding as that which requires us to rest on the seventh.

Drunkenness, or drinking spirituous liquors unless in cases of necessity. The Methodists from the beginning have been a temperance people, and they are still such, not in theory only but in practice. The American Methodists constitute, perhaps, the strongest single phalanx in the nation against this mammoth evil. But there needs to be the most thorough and constant teaching on this subject, in order that no generation of our young people shall be liable to repeat the folly and sin of drinking for lack of information. There is no sphere in which it is truer that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

Intemperance is the costliest and most destructive sin of mankind. It is this in itself, and in addition it leads in very many cases to every other form of sin. It is the mother of crimes. Intoxicants, even when used under the rule in "cases of necessity," ought to be used with the utmost caution and under the restraints of an enlightened conscience. The

story of the man who was bitten by a snake and was given whisky for it, though not new, is exact and apt. The bite got well, and in due time the snake died, but twenty years later the man was still taking the medicine.

All in all, total abstinence is the best rule, because the only one that is absolutely safe.

(a) *Fighting, quarreling, brawling;* (b) *brother going to law with brother;* (c) *returning evil for evil, or railing for railing;* (d) *the using many words in buying or selling.*

(*a*) These things are but little less than barbarous, and are wholly out of harmony with that spirit of fraternity which is ever a mark of the truly regenerate man.

(*b*) As a rule, litigation even for righteous claims is harmful to one's relations and influence. In most cases it is better both morally and financially to pay a lawyer to keep you out of the courts than to take you through them.

(*c*) "Evil for evil, or railing for railing," embodies the spirit of the old order of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," which Christ distinctly condemned.

(*d*) "Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Talk straight to the

point, and when you have done turn to something else.

The buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty.

The days in which these rules originated were days of much smuggling. The government was being constantly defrauded by shippers and merchants who in various ways were avoiding the payment of the lawful duties. This was simply stealing from the government, and those who knowingly took part in the benefits were partners with the thieves. Of course no truly Christian man could do such a thing. The principle involved still abides.

The tariff may be right or it may be wrong; but in either event the man who knowingly deals in goods which have not paid it is certainly wrong.

There is a very loose notion abroad as to the obligation on the part of the individual to deal fairly and justly with the government and with corporations. An honesty which does not deport itself with exact righteousness in relation to both is not worthy of the name.

The giving or taking things on usury, i. e., unlawful interest.

The word "usury" is from the Latin word *usus*, which in this connection means "so much for the use of"—that is, any interest whatever. It is in this sense that the word is used in the Bible. It retained this sense until within the last three centuries. The Jews were forbidden by the law to take any interest from each other for the use of money or other commodities. Hence under their law any interest was usury. Usury now means unlawful interest—that is, interest at a higher rate than that provided for in the law of the State within which the business is transacted. The terms "giving" and "taking" seem to include him who borrows at unlawful interest as well as him who lends. It must, nevertheless, be allowed that the two cases are quite different as to the moral element involved.

Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation, particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers.

This is an exceedingly important rule. The power of speech is one of the greatest and most dangerous dignities conferred upon man. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Purity of speech is one of the highest signs of a noble and re-

fined nature. Coarseness and baseness of speech can come from but one source. Men do not often make mistakes in their estimate of it. The crudest men know that lowness of speech is unbecoming the children of God.

Uncharitable speech indicates a harsh and uncharitable mood, if not a fixed disposition. It always inflicts two injuries, one upon the victim of it and the other upon the author. Charity even toward one's enemies is one of the strongest pledges of trueness toward one's friends. Uncharitable talk when once begun knows no limits. It is like a fire in a field, which does not burn according to metes and bounds, but by its own heat and the material it finds in all directions to feed upon.

The unprofitable conversation referred to in the rule means light and trashy talk, such as is common among gossips and gabblers, and to which young people are especially liable if not rightly guarded against it. The unfurnished mind finds it much easier to prate about things of no value than to prepare for seasonable and profitable talk. But unprofitable conversation also includes more serious and thoughtful talk which lacks a pure and helpful purpose. This is even more to be

avoided than idle and meaningless conversation.

Speaking evil of rulers and ministers is a very common fault. It seems to be assumed by many that any exaltation in office implies the right of the people to make a sort of target of the man thus exalted. Nothing is farther from the truth. Such men deserve the sympathy and the support of those whom they represent in so far as these can be conscientiously given. All faithful men occupying places of trust and power realize that the higher they go as men reckon height, the heavier their responsibilities become and the more burdensome their duties. Men, whether magistrates or ministers, who serve the people faithfully have a right to the moral support of the public. To discount this by evil-speaking is a wrong to the men and oftentimes a crime against the civil or religious interests which such men are set to serve.

If rulers or ministers are either incompetent [or unfaithful, let a change be made in a constitutional way. Evil-speaking corrects nothing.

In general, the habit of reckless criticism within the household needs to be most carefully guarded against. Much infidelity is bred

in children by indiscriminate and indiscreet criticism of the preacher and the preaching. Whoever destroys in himself or another a genuine reverence for superiors in years, in attainments, in position rightly used, is foolishly cutting from above him the rounds of the ladder by which he would rise to higher things. A true reverence, especially in young people, is one of the most beautiful and charming of virtues, and is the spring of unnumbered blessings to society. It is the very chivalry of man's moral nature, and adorns every stage of life as nothing else can do.

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us.

This is merely the negative statement of the golden rule, and includes all forms of injury to our fellow-men.

Doing what we know is not for the glory of God: as,

The putting on of gold and costly apparel.

A display of extravagant and vainglorious finery is always unbecoming in the children of God. This is no doubt the spirit aimed at in this rule. Any such interpretation of it as would lead the Church to regulate the personal habits of its members in regard to their attire has long since ceased. It is, neverthe-

less, well for all to have due regard to situation and ability in their dressing. The use of jewelry or fine clothing to the exclusion of a liberal part in the benevolent movements of the Church is wrong beyond question, and shows a low and selfish disregard of the claims of others for the necessities of life and for mental and spiritual enlightenment. It indicates a spirit which is far from the spirit of Christ. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus.

The language of this rule clearly implies that there are diversions which may be taken without injury. Diversions which are not in themselves harmful to health or character, when not used to excess so as to become a waste of time or a dissipation, may be used with profit.

What those diversions are is left to the intelligence and conscience of the individual believer, except as to those which have been commonly condemned by men as evil, or have been pronounced against by the authorities of our Church. These prohibited amusements are *dancing*, *card-playing*, *theater-going*, *attendance upon race courses*, *circuses*, *and the like.*

Chief among these offenses is the modern dance. The bishops, in their address to the General Conference of 1874, speak on the point as follows: "An explicit utterance was given by order of the last General Conference, in our pastoral address, on 'Worldly Amusenrents.' We now repeat that utterance. We abate none of its teachings with respect either to manifest inconsistency of such indulgences with the spirit and profession of the gospel, or the perils which they bring to the souls of men. . . . Among these indulgences . . . is the modern dance, both in its private and public exhibition, as utterly opposed to the genius of Christianity as taught by us."

The General Conference of 1890 appointed a special committee of fifteen to prepare an address on the spiritual state of the Church. The report of this committee was adopted by the General Conference and published in the Discipline of that year. In that report is found the following language:

"In this same condemnation, as equally contrary to the Scriptures, which declare that 'the friendship of the world is enmity against God,' to our General Rules, and to the vows which our members have voluntarily assumed,

this General Conference would include card-playing, theater-going, attendance upon race courses, circuses, and the like. These offenses are likewise justifiable grounds of discipline."

The General Conference, having adopted this report, took the following action:

"*Resolved*, That inasmuch as the deliverances of our bishops, as contained in their quadrennial addresses to the General Conference from time to time, and as quoted at length by the Special Committee of Fifteen, have declared dancing, theater-going, card-playing, and the like worldly indulgences, to be contrary to the spirit of Christianity, and violative of the General Rules and moral discipline of our Church, as also of the vows of our Church members; we therefore heartily indorse the aforesaid deliverances as containing the just and correct interpretation of the law in the premises, and as such this General Conference accepts the same as having equal force and authority as if contained in the body of the Discipline." (¶ 497, Discipline of 1890.)

These utterances and acts put the position of our Church on these diversions beyond question. In this regard the Methodist Church articulates and authoritatively states

what all the leading Churches hold. Especially is this true of the modern dance, which, though practiced by many Church members in the various denominations and is even connived at by some communions, is approved by no Church in Christendom, and is severely condemned by most.

A consensus of religious opinion running through many ages of trial and embracing many peoples touching the injurious nature of any practice is itself an almost unanswerable argument against such practice. But a careful examination into the data upon which the Church has made up and holds its estimate of the dance will furnish ample proofs to every age that the practice is thoroughly carnal, wars against spiritual interests, and brings much detriment to the spiritual life of many who engage in it.

But let it be noted that a wise administration of discipline in regard to these things will never be harsh. It is sometimes very difficult for young persons to see in these diversions what the Church sees. While all sane young persons can see that a vow deliberately made and deliberately and habitually broken involves sin, it is still best to reënforce them with such knowledge of the in-

herent or incidental evil of these practices as will make them both clear and strong in their own views against them. A wise discipline will, therefore, always be by instruction, by patience, and in the main by persuasion.

The singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God.

The songs and books of a people are the mightiest factors in determining of what character a people shall be. Singing and reading are, therefore, suitable subjects for advisory rules on the part of the Church which would bring its members to the highest and best. This rule does not mean that we are to sing no songs or read no books except such as are distinctly religious in character, but rather that we shall avoid all such as are pernicious or empty of substantial good. In Mr. Wesley's time there was very little that was wholesome and edifying in the literature of the day, and much that was bad, and he did a truly great work in expunging, recasting, and making books for his people to read. There is now no more important interest for parents and religious teachers to look after. Many a young person has been ruined by making a companion of one bad book.

Softness or needless self-indulgence.

There is no room for a lazy man in the kingdom of God. A self-indulgent and ease-seeking person cannot fairly claim to be a follower of our Lord, who himself came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and who went about doing good. The servant is not above his Lord. It is every man's duty to be diligent, not only in spiritual concerns but also in temporal affairs. No amount of wealth or opportunity for ease can free a man from the obligation to pursue with alacrity some chosen field of service.

Laying up treasure upon earth.

Mr. Wesley in one of his sermons gives three great mottoes on this subject: (1) Make all you can. (2) Save all you can. (3) Give all you can. Make all you can consistently with perfect integrity and the rights of others. Save all you can—that is, waste nothing. Give all you can consistently with your plain obligations. Mr. Wesley himself made much, wasted nothing, gave everything. Had he been a man of family, he probably could not have made so much, wasted so little, or given all. Nevertheless, he preached the right doctrine and gave the right example concerning earthly treasures. Some wag has

said pithily at least that the maxim which governs the business world of to-day is: "Make all you can, and can all you make." Perhaps no desire is more universal and more hurtful to spiritual life than the desire to lay up treasure upon earth. The Church is by no means free from it, and there is much need of sound teaching in order that our people may be saved from an inordinate love of the world.

Borrowing without a probability of paying, or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

This is virtually obtaining money or goods under false pretenses, which is a misdemeanor under the laws of many, perhaps most, of the States. Thoroughgoing honesty is one of the most valuable fruits of the gospel, and is one of the most charming traits in Church members as they are looked upon by the eyes of the world. There are honest pagans; shall any Christian be less?

The next section of the Rules, on doing good, is given so clearly and in such detail as to need no comment. It is as follows:

It is expected of all who continue in these societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Secondly, by doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power, as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men:

To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison;

To their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine that "we are not to do good unless our hearts be free to it."

By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others, buying one of another, helping each other in business; and so much the more because the world will love its own, and them only.

By all possible diligence and frugality, that the gospel be not blamed.

By running with patience the race which is set before them, denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world, and looking that men should say all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake.

It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Thirdly, by attending upon all the ordinances of God; such are,

The public worship of God.

There is much strength in fellowship, no matter what the issue; especially is this the case in spiritual things. No man is so strong as not to need the reënforcement which comes from communion with those of like mind and heart. The doctrines of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man stand very close together. He who has lost his *sense of fellowship* would do well to look closely into the *foundations of his faith*. The great defection of Thomas against his Lord was due to his being absent from the first prayer meeting after the resurrection. "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is." When the Pentecost came, the disciples were of one accord in one place. The divine presence is promised to the assemblies of the saints.

The ministry of the word, either read or expounded.

Jesus ordained that the world should be saved by the preaching of the gospel. There

is no substitute for preaching. It has regulated the ethical state of men through the ages more than any other influence, and will probably continue to do so to the end.

Paul asks: "How can they hear without a preacher?" It may also be asked: "How can he preach without hearers?" It is the plain duty of every member who can to attend regularly upon the ministry of the word, and especially upon that of his own Church. All the good ends of good preaching are helped by good hearing.

The Supper of the Lord.

Our Lord, who while living made himself of no reputation, left of himself when departing no monument except that he made of the perishable elements, bread and wine, a remembrancer. Even this is conditioned upon love and faith upon the part of those who eat and drink. He did not designate a place, a time, or a quantity. He said in substance: Do this as oft as ye shall do it in remembrance of me. The use of this holy sacrament is both a privilege and a duty. Many have been deterred from it by foolish and superstitious conceits. He eats and drinks worthily who eats and drinks with faith, and, it might be added, with a sense of his own unworthiness.

It is the place of the stewards in each charge to procure and arrange the elements for the sacrament. This should always be attended to in a becoming way. In some places there is much neglect. A neat pitcher, however cheap, is better than the bottle which sometimes appears. There is no occasion in connection with which there is more reason that all the proprieties should be carefully observed.

Family and private prayer.

There can be no spiritual life without prayer. It is "the Christian's vital breath." The neglect of it is always followed by religious decline. The great movements of the Church can be marked by the presence of men and women who were mighty in prayer—princes who prevailed with God.

The family altar is the birthplace of reverence and devotion as is no other place on earth. Parents who allow their children to go into the severe ordeals of life without its hallowed memories and fruits commit a great wrong against their offspring.

Searching the Scriptures.

One might as well expect to become a great lawyer without studying the common law or the statutes of his State as to become a robust

Christian without a thorough knowledge and frequent reading of the word of God. It is the sword of the Spirit, and he who fights sin in himself and others must know and constantly use it. The tendency to turn all Scripture study out of the family into the Sunday school is pernicious. The home is the best place for readying and studying God's word.

Fasting or abstinence.

This rule has fallen very much into disuse. It is, nevertheless, an important one. There are occasions in religious life and effort for which fasting or abstinence is an almost necessary preparation. It is wholesome for the body, quickens the mental faculties, tends to a sense of dependence by impressing us with the perishable nature of our bodies and of all terrestrial life, leads to gratitude for material gifts, and in many ways helps toward a more spiritual order of living.

II.

The Conferences of Methodism.

When a number of persons join in the doing of any work, it is well for them to understand thoroughly three things: the reasons for doing the work, the methods by which it is to be done, and the field in which they are to labor.

In the foregoing statement of our doctrines are given what may be called in the highest sense the reasons for all the labors which have engaged the Methodists for more than a century and a half and are engaging them now throughout the world. In the following pages it is proposed to set forth in a very brief way the polity of Methodism, or its method of working, and also to outline at least the fields of its operation.

It may be well to say at the outset that the polity of Methodism is unique—that is, it differs in so many vital points from the polities of the other Churches that there has been nothing hitherto in ecclesiastical history to which it may be compared. It will become necessary in these pages to stress these pe-

culiarities, sometimes to the point of making a comparison of its results with those obtained by other branches of the Christian Church, for whose character and methods the writer entertains a profound respect.

The assembly name of Methodism in all its branches is the word "Conference." The spirit and purpose of Methodist assemblies is very well conveyed by this term, which means a meeting together in order to confer touching all the persons and interests which lie within the domain of the Conference.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has five kinds of Conference: Church, Quarterly, District, Annual, General.

1. The Church Conference is composed of all the members of the local Church and resident members of the Annual Conference. The pastor is the chairman. A secretary is elected annually by the body. This Conference is very much like a family meeting in which all the interests of the household may be freely discussed and all local interests looked after, and is invaluable in quickening all the interests of the Church.

The Church Conference is directed to meet once a month in stations, and at least once every three months at each appointment on

circuits. For order of work see Discipline, ¶ 91.

2. The Quarterly Conference. — This body meets, as its name implies, once a quarter, or four times in each Conference year. It is composed of all the traveling and local preachers residing within the circuit or station, with the exhorters, stewards, trustees, and class leaders of the respective circuits, stations, and missions, together with the superintendents of Sunday schools who are male members of the Church, the secretaries of Church Conferences, and the presidents of Senior Epworth Leagues, when eligible. The chairman of the Quarterly Conference is the presiding elder or, in his absence, the preacher in charge. For order of work see Discipline, ¶ 87.

3. The District Conference.—This meeting is held once a year in each district at such time as the presiding elder may appoint. The District Conference is composed of all the preachers in the district, traveling and local, and of laymen, the number of whom and the mode of their appointment each Annual Conference determines for itself. The chairman of the District Conference is a bishop or, in his absence, the presiding elder. For order of work see Discipline, ¶ 72.

4. The Annual Conference.—This Conference is composed of all the traveling preachers in full connection with it and four lay representatives from each district. The lay members are chosen annually by the District Conference, and participate in all the business of the Conference except such as involves ministerial character. The number and bounds of the Annual Conferences are determined by the General Conference. The time of each meeting is appointed by the bishop in charge, and the place is fixed by the Conference. The President of the Annual Conference is one of the bishops or, in his absence, a member of the Conference elected by ballot. The president thus elected discharges all the duties of a bishop except that of ordination.

This is by far the most important, though not the highest in authority, of all the Conferences of Methodism. It has executive supervision of all the interests of the Church within its prescribed bounds, such as furnishing the people with the gospel, Home and Foreign Missions, Church extension, Sunday schools, Epworth Leagues, and Christian education. It has also large powers of initiation. Indeed, much of our General Conference legislation originates as to the thought

and plan within one or more of the Annual Conferences, and no constitutional matter passed upon by the General Conference can become law without the approval of three-fourths of the members of all the Annual Conferences.

The Annual Conference passes at each session upon the personal life and official administration of every preacher who is a member of it. The method adopted in this is as open and clear as possible. The name of each man is called in open Conference under the question, "Are all the preachers blameless in their life and official administration?" The answer must be audible and without ambiguity. If a negative answer be given by anybody, lay or clerical, the law provides for an immediate investigation, and the acquittal of the accused or the imposition of proper penalties, the extremest of which is expulsion from the ministry and the Church. The right of appeal belongs to every member who is convicted of any crime. That appeal is to the General Conference next ensuing. If a member be tried and acquitted, there can be no appeal: the decision of the Annual Conference is final. The Annual Conference has the right to locate one of its members for ineffi-

ciency or unacceptability. Such action does not imply anything against the personal character of the one so dealt with.

We have forty-six Annual Conferences. Four of these are in foreign countries, and one lies partly in Mexico and partly in the United States.

5. *The General Conference.*—This body is composed of an equal number of traveling preachers and laymen, elected by the several Annual Conferences. The maximum and minimum ratios of representation are fixed by what is called the Second Restrictive Rule. Within the limits thus fixed the General Conference may determine from time to time such ratios as it may deem advisable. The present ratio is one clerical member for every forty-eight members of each Annual Conference, and an equal number of lay members. The latest General Conference (1902) was composed of two hundred and seventy-eight members.

The President of the General Conference is one of the bishops or, if all the bishops should be absent or disabled, a member of the body elected by ballot. The bishops are not members of the General Conference otherwise than as Presidents of the body when in session.

The General Conference is the only legislative assembly of the Church, and its business is largely transacted through established committees, very much as in other legislative bodies. The standing committees are fourteen in number, and are as follows: Episcopacy, Revisals, Boundaries, Itinerancy, Missions, Sunday Schools, Epworth League, Education, Temperance, Finance, Church Extension, Publishing Interests, Colportage, Appeals.

The General Conference, being a delegated body, representative of the whole Church, has power to do whatever it deems best for the interests of the Church within the limits prescribed in the Six Restrictive Rules. It has power also to alter any of these rules except the first, which relates to the making of any change in our Articles of Religion. The method prescribed for altering any of the other five is given in a proviso to the Sixth Rule. It provides that the proposed change shall pass the General Conference by a two-thirds majority, and then be ratified by three-fourths of the members of the several Annual Conferences present and voting. Such proposals of change may originate with the Annual Conferences. In that event the

order is reversed, and a three-fourths vote in the Annual Conferences must be followed by a two-thirds vote of the General Conference.

The General Conference meets once in four years in the month of April or May, and at such place as it may select.

In the interim of the General Conferences the work prescribed by it is carried forward under the direction of the following

General Boards.

(1) The Book Committee, which has full supervision of all our publishing interests, and to which all connectional officers are amenable for their official conduct till the meeting of the General Conference. This committee is composed of thirteen members, six clerical and seven lay, elected by the General Conference, on nomination of a special committee appointed by the bishops. It elects its own chairman and secretary quadrennially.

(2) The Board of Missions, which consists of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and seventeen managers, elected by the General Conference quadrennially. The bishops and the Secretary of the Board of

Church Extension are *ex officio* members of the Board.

The Board of Managers has full charge of all foreign missionary affairs, such as the raising of funds and their application, the selection of candidates for the work, and the supervision of all the interests of the Church in foreign fields.

This Board has also an Assistant Secretary, elected by the Board quadrennially.

(3) The Sunday School Board. This Board consists of six members, five elected quadrennially by the General Conference, and the Sunday School Editor, who is elected quadrennially by the General Conference, and who is *ex officio* chairman of the Board. To this Board belongs the general management of all Sunday school interests throughout the Church.

(4) The Epworth League Board, consisting of thirteen members, six clerical and six lay and one of the bishops, who is *ex officio* President of the Board. Besides the President and General Secretary, who is elected quadrennially by the General Conference, the other officers are three Vice Presidents and a Treasurer, who are elected quadrennially by the Board.

(5) The Board of Education, which is composed of fifteen members, elected by the General Conference on nomination of the Committee on Education. The Board elects its own President, Vice President, and Recording Secretary, who also acts as Treasurer. The Corresponding Secretary, known as the Secretary of Education, is elected by the General Conference.

It is the duty of this Board to supervise all the educational interests of the Church, as provided for in Chapter XII. of the Discipline.

(6) The Board of Church Extension, which consists of a President, Vice President, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer, and thirteen members, elected quadrennially by the General Conference, and continuing in office until their successors are elected and accept. The bishops and Secretary of Board of Missions are *ex officio* members of the Board. For a full statement of the work committed to this Board see Discipline, ¶¶ 381–393.

All these Boards meet once a year, usually in the month of May, and in the city of Nashville, except the Board of Church Extension, which meets in Louisville, Ky.

III.

The Itinerancy.

The Methodist itinerancy is the most perfectly organized obedience the world has yet seen to the great commission: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

The two commands of the commission are *to go* and *to preach.*

A Church which was the chief exponent of that phase of Arminian theology which teaches that all men are free to be saved, and that nothing stands in the way thereto except their own agency, could not logically stop short of claiming the world for its parish. To visit that parish with the gospel was the great economic problem with which it undertook to deal in the production of an itinerant plan for the preaching of the gospel.

Every one entering our traveling connection solemnly pledges himself to go anywhere to preach the gospel, whither the appointing power may send him. This does not mean simply anywhere within that Annual Conference with which he connects his for-

tunes, but anywhere within the range of a reasonable demand for his services.

This leads me to remark that the Methodist itinerancy is as general as the episcopacy. Every preacher who unites with any Conference thereby joins the traveling connection —that is, joins the ministry of Southern Methodism to go whithersoever the bishop may see such need of his services as justifies his appointment. This is the economic fact upon which the transfer power of the bishop is based. Otherwise the transfer power would become nothing more than a power of persuasion, and as a matter of authority amount to nothing. It is proper to say here that our bishops usually, perhaps unexceptionally, confer with a preacher to be transferred from his own to another Conference, so as, in a good measure, to secure his assent before he is appointed. The bishops, nevertheless, have the power to transfer a preacher to any field within our boundaries without his consent, and even against his will in the case. It is due to be said here that, inasmuch as our itinerancy is as general as our episcopacy, and as our Church confers upon the bishops the right to transfer preachers without any final right on the part of the preachers to refuse, such preachers, when

transferred, have the same right to consideration and fellowship as those who have been members of the receiving Conference from the beginning. As a matter of fact, the transfer has to forego many things which are peculiarly dear to a Methodist preacher in order to serve the Church by obeying the order of Providence and the appointing power to the extent of leaving his own Conference to take work in another.

But the life work of nearly all our preachers is within the bounds of the Annual Conference with which they first connect themselves. Within those bounds every man is appointed to his work each year by the bishop who presides. The bishop alone is the responsible appointing power. This does not mean that no others exert an influence. The bishop receives much advice, a large amount of which he is no doubt wise in disregarding. But so vast a movement as the itinerancy does not leave so vital a matter to haphazard. The bishops are furnished with the best system possible for obtaining counsel of the most seasoned kind in regard to both the preachers to be appointed and the fields to be served. For the full vindication of this position it is necessary that we

glance at the order of work within the Conference.

Each Annual Conference contains quite a large territory, sometimes a whole state, sometimes a half state, and so on, according to the population to be served, etc. The largest Conferences have from one hundred and fifty to two hundred pastoral charges, embracing from sixty to one hundred thousand Church members. Each Conference is divided into a number of presiding elders' districts, from ten to twelve, according to the number of charges in the Conference. These districts usually contain from twelve to twenty pastoral charges. The presiding elder, appointed annually by the bishop, has charge of the district, and his duties in general are to preach on four occasions in each pastoral charge, to preside over the Quarterly and District Conferences, counsel with the preachers for their own improvement and for the benefit of the Church, and to see that all the interests of the Church are looked after. This office is one of very great importance, and when duly magnified stands second only to that of a bishop. It involves heavy labors, large responsibilities, and vast opportunities.

This leads us back to the question of the

appointing power and the usual method of its exercise. All the presiding elders of an Annual Conference compose a council which has come to be called the bishop's cabinet. Usually the presiding bishop calls the presiding elders to meet him daily, and they together go carefully over the charges, examining into the work of the preachers, and making a tentative appointment of each to a place. There are frequent revisions of these appointments before they are ready for announcement at the close of the Conference. Not only does the bishop have the full benefit of the counsel of these chosen advisers, but any preacher or layman has access to the presiding elders and the bishop to show any view he may hold in regard to men and places. But after all, the responsibility for every appointment is with the bishop, who, if he should choose, has power to change all the appointments agreed upon by the presiding elders, including the places of the presiding elders themselves.

It has been said by some that this order places too much power in the hands of the bishops. This might be true under certain conceivable conditions. But so long as wise men do not put themselves to great trouble to do foolish things, or good men to do bad

things, in either case without reward and in full view of persuasive penalties, there is no danger of the misuse of this peculiarly sacred power. Bishops are, of course, not infallible, and may be deceived either intentionally on the part of some who approach them or unwittingly on the part of others, and thus mistakes may occur. But even in that event there are more expeditious and easier corrections in our system than in any other yet tried by the Church.

No preacher is appointed to any work for more than one year at a time, nor can any be appointed to the same charge for more than the fourth year in succession, except in those peculiar cases provided for in the Discipline.

Now and then a little local antagonism on the part of preachers and congregations has appeared on account of this feature—the time limit; but in reality there is not a more important feature of the itinerant system.

It has been said that it prevents us from having a settled pastorate, such as is found in the Churches which have the congregational form of government, where the congregation selects the pastor and keeps him so long as the people want him and he wishes to stay. A few instances of a pastorate running through

forty or even fifty years have given an incorrect impression as to the average duration of the pastoral term in the congregational Churches. On the other hand, the liability to an annual change in our pastorate and the certainty of it at the end of four years have produced an erroneous impression as to its average duration.

Some years ago Bishop McTyeire made a very careful inquiry into this matter and brought to light some very surprising data. He made the field of comparison to cover the leading towns and cities of the South and Southwest where our Church has its chief sphere of work. The three leading Congregational Churches of the same region are the Baptist, the Presbyterian, and the Protestant Episcopal. Bishop McTyeire obtained the record of the pastorates of these three Churches through a considerable period, and found that the average pastoral term in our Church was longer than the average term in the other three—that is, putting together the pastorates of the other three Churches and obtaining the average for the three, ours was found to be the longer term. The Bishop called attention to another feature of the situation which is worthy of note—viz., that when in other

Churches the people would be rid of a pastor they must construct a prize with which to lift him out, while with the Methodists the wheel rolls round on schedule and rolls him out. There can be no doubt as to the superiority of the wheel over the lever as a means of locomotion.

But there is a much more important thing than the length of the pastoral term which has been accomplished by our system as by no other—viz., the constant furnishing of all our people with preaching and the other means of grace.

It has been the economic boast of Methodism that it has no preacher without a Church to serve, and no Church without a preacher. In the congregational Churches this evil is inevitable and constant. Occasional reports made public touching this question show thousands of Churches in the United States without a pastor, and about the same number of pastors without a Church.

Through the itinerant plan as used by us not only is every congregation constantly supplied with pastoral service, but by reason of our connectional order men are often appointed to places where we have neither an organized society nor a place of worship. They

are sustained out of a fund raised in each Conference for that purpose until the people have been evangelized and have themselves become contributors to the further spread of the same gospel which has saved them.

The itinerancy requires that many things of a social nature be foregone by both pastor and people, things which in themselves are delightful and worthy to be sought. It also involves many inconveniences, and even to this day hardships of no ordinary kind. But it is the best way of doing the thing proposed, and is not likely to decline or grow effete so long as the Methodist people maintain that spirit of obedience to the great commission which led to its origination and its use thus far.

The success of the itinerancy as a means of evangelization has been truly wonderful. The organized movement began in England with all odds against it in 1739, and in America in 1769. So rapid has been the growth of the Church that its members now number nearly seven millions, with probably not less than fifty millions of adherents. It has not only grown populous beyond any precedent, but it has become rich and influential, and has affected favorably the doctrines and poli-

ties of nearly all the Protestant denominations. God has unquestionably set his seal of approval upon it. Notwitstanding the marvelous progress of the past, it is evident that Methodism has but fairly begun its career of evangelization, provided its leaders and people are true to its doctrines and life. Many lands, with their teeming unsaved millions, await its ministry. In no land where it has been planted thus far have its truths and plans of work failed to command the respect and acceptance of the people.

IV.

Our Ministry.

We hold steadfastly to the doctrine that God calls those whom he would have to proclaim his message, and that such a call implies a call to thoroughly prepare for the best use of the holy office.

When one is inwardly persuaded of his call to the ministry, he is, if on examination found worthy, recommended by the Quarterly Conference of the charge to which he belongs for license to preach. This recommendation is now to the District Conference. Formerly—that is, from the time of our organization till 1894—the licensing of preachers was by the Quarterly Conference. The District Conference receiving the recommendation examines into the gifts, graces, and usefulness of the candidate; and, finding him worthy, grants a license for one year, which must thereafter be annually renewed until the local preacher thus made is ordained a deacon. This ordination comes in due course, by vote of the Annual Conference, in four years, provided the local preacher has done satisfactory work and is recommended by the District Confer-

ence for this order. If the local preacher thus made desires to join the traveling connection, he procures a recommendation from the District Conference to the Annual Conference for admission on trial. At the session of the Annual Conference he is examined by two committees touching his gifts, attainments, and suitableness for this work. If found worthy, and if he be needed, he is admitted on trial by a majority vote of the Annual Conference. He is not then a member of the Conference, but is a local preacher on trial to become a member. If at the expiration of two years he has proven his fitness for the work, and passed satisfactory examinations on the course of study for the two years, he is by order of the Conference ordained a deacon and admitted into membership in the Conference. If he continue for two years more to demonstrate his fitness for the work, and pass the required examinations on the course of study for the third and fourth years, he is ordained an elder.

When once admitted into membership in the traveling connection, there are five ways of going out: To withdraw; to die; to be expelled for immorality, as provided for in the Discipline; to ask for and receive a location;

and to be located by vote of the Conference for inefficiency or unacceptability. When location occurs, either by request or by the unsolicited vote of the Conference, the one thus located remains a local preacher.

It should here be noted that the work of a local preacher is chiefly to preach within the charge to which he belongs, under the direction of the preacher in charge, and to assist in all manner of religious work as opportunity may offer. The local preacher pursues some other vocation for a livelihood, and usually receives nothing for his services as a preacher. The local preacher has been, through most of our history, a great power in the Church. With the multiplication of regular pastors, and a decrease in the size of pastoral charges, by which most of our people are furnished with frequent opportunities for hearing the word, there has come a decline in our local ministry which is to be much regretted. There is still room for the constant employment of thousands of such godly and devoted men, and the seer who can suggest a plan by which the local ministry can be restored to its pristine power and spiritual glory will confer a lasting benefit upon the Church. The English Meth-

odists, amidst their crowded conditions, are making great use of it.

Within the Annual Conference, and apart from those who are in the active work, there are supernumerary and superannuated preachers. "A supernumerary preacher is one who is so disabled by affliction as to be unable to preach constantly, but who is willing to do any work in the ministry which the bishop may direct and he may be able to perform." "A superannuated preacher is one who is worn out in the itinerant service." Superannuated preachers are supported in whole or in part, usually in part, and a very small part at best, out of the superannuates' fund—a fund raised chiefly by collections throughout the Annual Conference for that purpose.

The highest place in our ministry is that of bishop, or General Superintendent. Our bishops are elected by the General Conference, which, as we have seen, is a delegated body composed of an equal number of traveling preachers and laymen. Bishops are in every way amenable to the body which makes them. The life and official administration of each is passed under review once in four years. This is done in what is known as the Committee on Episcopacy. Any preacher or layman in the

connection may come, by letter or in per on, before this committee with any complaint he may wish to make. It thus happens that our bishops' lives are lived in the open like those of all our preachers. No class is held to a stricter accountability; and yet there is in that Committee, as elsewhere, a profound reverence for the office and for those who are called to fill it. This is largely due to the unimpeachable integrity and purity of those who have been occupants of that place. We have never had a case of trouble with a bishop on moral grounds, and none of a serious nature on grounds of administration.

The College of Bishops meets once a year, in the month of May, to consider all the interests of the Church committed to them. There is an annual assignment made of each bishop to the work of the ensuing year. This is done through a committee of bishops appointed for that purpose by the College.

There is no class of preachers among us to which is assigned so long and varied a list of duties as to our bishops. Their responsibilities are of the largest, and their fields of labor practically boundless. This will be readily seen by reading, in Chapter III., Section 2, of

the Discipline, what the Church provides that its bishops shall do.

The bishops, being general superintendents, are supported by the general Church out of funds collected for the purpose within each Annual Conference. Bishops who have become superannuated, and the widows and children of deceased bishops, are sustained in the same way. Both the salaries and allowances are fixed by recommendation of the Committee on Episcopacy.

V.

Our Connectionalism.

We may say, without any disparagement of other forms of Church government, that there is one element in Methodism which surpasses anything hitherto known in Church organization. That feature may be called the genius of it rather than a mere element. We refer to its connectionalism. We call it the genius of Methodism because it pervades with its spirit every part of the system from the reception of a preacher on trial to the bishopric or general superintendence, and is in all the work of the Church from the extension of church-building within the home field to the giving of the gospel to every creature. By connectionalism we mean that summation of conditions by which the whole Church is present in a good sense wherever any part of it exists—that is, each part is in vital relation to all the others. The most inexperienced preacher in the humblest field is there in effect by the appointment or will of the whole Church. The Church brings this appointment about by the simplest and most rational method possible. It is through the

bishop, who has a wholly general relation, and who is as truly subject to appointment by his peers as the pastors are to appointment by him. He has his work assigned him once a year, and each time his field is as liable to be within China or Brazil as in Tennessee. But this general superintendence, which is thus free from local prejudices, is not a haphazard matter. The bishop does his work after counsel from the presiding elders, whose business it is to know in as far as possible both the man and the field. The bishops themselves are elected to this work by the whole Church in a delegated assembly, which is composed of traveling preachers and laymen in equal numbers, and the bishops are constantly amenable to this body for the way in which they exercise this appointing power as well as all other functions which belong to the office. It is in this way that the whole Church makes the appointment of any preacher, whether he be the pastor of the remotest mission, with its peculiar hardships, or the episcopacy, with its fullness of care and responsibility. This principle finds most impressive illustration when an Annual Conference meets in its last session to receive the appointments. In the whole body not a man knows certainly what

his field of labor will be until the pronouncement falls from the lips of the bishop, the man through whom the Church appoints him. These men are not less ardent in their attachments because of the fact that their system makes them cosmopolitan in their sympathies and habits of thought. No men have stronger individuality or more definite preferences than Methodist preachers. They go, nevertheless, whithersoever they are sent with a good cheer which is utterly inexplicable to those who do not understand the workings of our system. There is no truer exhibition of moral sublimity in all the organizations of men than an Annual Conference receiving the appointments.

There is not to be found elsewhere in human history such a combination of self-surrender and pure democracy as is found in the Methodist itinerancy and its loyal acceptance by the Church. The self-surrender element is found in the Catholic Church, especially in its Jesuitism, but the democracy is not there. With the Romanists everything proceeds from a so-called infallible pope; with the Methodists everything, including its ministry throughout, is of the Church. The self-surrender of the Methodist preacher, while

in a broad and high sense absolute, is yet under guard of a democratic order so thorough and complete as to take out of it all elements of mere chance and as far as possible all dangers from mere personal prejudice. In other words, his surrender is not to any man or committee of men, but to the whole Church for the good of the whole. Not only so, but the surrender of the right, on the part of the preacher, to choose his field of work is answered back to by the surrender, on the part of the congregation, of its right to choose a pastor. And yet there is no lack of intelligent counsel both ways. A practical outcome of this order is that probably no Church is better satisfied with its pastors, and no preachers more unselfishly devoted to their people.

As it is in the ministry, so it is in the work of the Church. The Church itself in general council determines what work shall be undertaken of a general order, and by a rational method determines what part of the work shall be done by each part of the Church, and thus stands back of the individual pastor, as he proceeds to his task, and furnishes the pledge of its assembled wisdom to each congregation as it goes forward with the achievement of its part of the whole. It will be

easily seen that this plan greatly reënforces the individual invention of the pastor, and, when the pastor is wholly lacking in invention, provides for a safe and harmonious schedule of Church work.

In the connectional order of Methodism the Boards of Management are truly General Boards. Each Annual Conference has its own Boards, but in addition to superintending local or Conference interests these Boards have a connectional side. They execute within the Annual Conferences the plans of the General Boards. The General Boards are created by the General Conference every four years, and in all the interests committed to them they stand for the General Conference in the interims of its meetings. In this way the will of the general Church or General Conference is made to run on without lack of authority or resources as surely and as successfully as if each interest were under the immediate direction of the General Conference itself. As a result of this arrangement, whatever these Boards undertake, within the limitations put upon them, becomes a matter for the whole Church, in the doing of which the honor of the Church is involved, and in which the loyalty of every

charge to the will of the general Church comes into play.

There are certain things which stand related to this connectional organization very much as in geometry a corollary is related to a theorem and its processes of demonstration. Logically considered, they are "obvious consequences," whether they have as yet materialized into a part of our polity, as some of them have, or stand forth only in the form of a logical demand that the Church shall use them.

One of these corollaries is the transfer power, which is born of the relation of our general superintendency to our general itinerancy as set forth in the discussion of "Our Itinerancy."

Two other conclusions which connectionalism was bound to reach, and did reach long ago, were a connectional organ and a connectional publishing interest. How well these have worked, we have all seen long ago. Some years ago, when the Publishing House became involved to a point of practical insolvency, the connectional spirit was appealed to, and a process was begun which resulted quickly in its recuperation, and brought it in a short while to foundations which are among

the securest in modern commerce. The same thing was illustrated in the payment in one year of a missionary debt of more than one hundred and thirty thousand dollars without diminishing the regular collections for that interest. This magnificent result was largely due to the fact that when the Secretary, Dr. Morrison, went forth on his mission he was as much at home and in authority in San Francisco as he was in Nashville, where the offices of the Boards are located. Again the rallying of the connectional spirit, and the use of the connectional opportunity, saved the cause.

But there are two other conclusions which are inevitable from the connectional order of Methodism, which are just beginning to be realized as a part of the polity of the Church. One of these is a connectional system of education. The present Board of Education has taken steps which unquestionably tend in that direction, and some progress has been made toward practical results. Indeed, the act of the Board of Trust of Vanderbilt University and of the General Conference in making that institution the university of the whole Church gives promise of a thoroughly related and compacted system which will en-

able us to lead the van, not by the sacrifice of other great schools, but by an order which will help them all, and which will reach down and clasp hands with the public school system so as to conserve rather than in any sense surrender the Methodist element in them.

But perhaps the finest conclusion, and one which we are barely entering upon, is the creation of a connectional fund for our superannuated preachers. The doing of this is an easy thing under a proper plan and with the right time limits. This is a matter in which we can much better afford to go slowly than not to go at all. The lifetime of a Church is a long stretch. So long as our itinerancy continues, the worn-out preacher without resources is to be a stupendous fact in our Church life. The late General Conference (1902) determined upon the raising of five million dollars for this purpose. The sources chiefly relied upon under that order are popular collections and bequests. Other sources will probably be put under contribution later. There are at least two others which might be used with great profit to the fund. The first of these is a certain per cent of the popular collection in every charge. The stimu-

lating effect of such a movement would make the remaining per cent a larger amount than that which is now raised for the same purpose, and would result in the bringing of this great claim clearly before our people. The second is a fixed percentage of the clearings of the Publishing House.

After all, nothing of an economic kind would have a better effect in guarding our ministry against the danger of the continuance of inefficient men in the traveling connection. Such a fund would bring a better service and a greater dignity to the Church, and a larger sense of security to the faithful men who are toiling on amidst galling limitations to serve their generation by the will of God.

It is easy to see that the Methodist polity, when operated according to its design, is an organization of tremendous force and unequaled flexibility. The system is capable of a vast impact, one which is scarcely resistible within the domain of the Church's work. But from the fact that our polity is a perfect concatenation of parts—that is, a chain of essential links—it follows that a want of strength or adjustment at any point affects the efficiency of the whole order. It

implies, therefore, an extraordinary responsibility for all those who have any vital connection with the operation of the system.

From what has been said concerning the relation of parts in our system, it is not difficult to see that we are at the farthest remove from the congregational system. The two orders are as unlike as possible. They will not mix. Whether the congregational order could be improved by the organic adoption of certain features of our polity is a curious question on which we do not desire to enter; but that any tendency toward congregationalism, or even broader forms of localizing, works detriment to our interests there can scarcely be any question. It is a question whether or not there is such a tendency in some sections among us. We have occasionally seen symptoms which look in this direction, but nothing which indicates a serious change of thought, only a loss of sympathy. It is well, however, for every pastor and teacher to keep careful and statesmanlike guard over the loyalty of the people to our connectional order and interests. And it is well to remember that this loyalty is not a thing to be effected by the exercise of authority, but to be developed by a broad intelli-

gence as to the nature of our polity and of the vastness and importance of the general work which the Church has taken in hand, a work which is impossible of full accomplishment except by the cordial coöperation of all the congregations. It sometimes happens that a community, or an element in a community, loses sympathy with the general movements of the Church, then loses the sense of connectionalism; and finally, finding itself unable to coöperate in this disjointed state with the great body, goes off into independence—that is, becomes congregational. As a rule, such movements have not succeeded; as a rule, they probably never will. The conditions of success which belong to the regular congregational system are wanting, and the conditions which bring success to a connectional Church have been rejected.

What Methodism could do, if every man would only do his duty in an ordinary measure, staggers conception. It is able not only to girdle the globe with a holy and triumphant evangelism, but also to belt it with institutions of learning, of reform, and of charity. To have part in the operation of a system the possibilities of which are beyond speech — almost beyond figures — implies a

vast responsibility, the very thought of which ought to arouse every Methodist to new vigor in the doing of his part. The system itself is in default at no point. The only trouble is a lack of fidelity on the part of those who have formally given their allegiance but have withheld their aid.

VI.

Fields of Work.

Missions.

The missionary work of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is divided into Foreign Missions and Home Missions, and is under the supervision of the Board of Missions, the Woman's Foreign Missionary Board, the Woman's Home Mission Board, and one Board in each of the Annual Conferences.

The statistics of these several fields are as follows:

BOARD OF MISSIONS.

The following figures show the increase in contributions for missions in the quadrennium ending March 31, 1902:

	Regular Collections.	From All Sources.
1899	$ 220,494 92	$ 255,525 03
1900	235,116 51	284,220 46
1901	267,084 22	330,356 65
1902	291,672 79	362,135 85
Total for quadrennium	$1,014,368 44	$1,232,237 99
Former quadrennium	901,593 24	1,077,388 13
Increase	$ 112,775 20	$ 154,849 86

Number of missionaries, 160. Number of native preachers, 102.

CHINA MISSION CONFERENCE.

This mission was founded in 1848. Our first missionary in that field was Rev. Chas. Taylor, of the South Carolina Conference. The latest reports give the following figures: Missionaries (including wives), 33; native traveling preachers, 15; members, 934; Sunday schools, 29; scholars, 1,712; Epworth Leagues, 18; membership, 599; organized Churches, 27; Churches entirely self-supporting, 3; boarding schools, 2; pupils, 264; day schools, 8; pupils, 153; hospital, 1; dispensaries, 2; patients treated, 16,462; total collections, $1,416.55; total value of mission property, $195,932.50.

THE KOREA MISSION.

The Korea Mission forms one district of the China Mission Conference; but the language, national life, and general conditions make the work so radically different that financially and administratively it is separately considered by the Board. It was opened by Bishop Hendrix in 1895. Dr. C. F. Reid, of the China Mission, was appointed superintendent. The conversion of Mr. T. H. Yun and his urgent appeal to enter Korea became a call of Providence to the Church. The superintendent reports: Missionaries (including

wives), 12; local preachers and helpers, 28; members, 424 (increase, 155); Sunday schools, 11; scholars, 343; dispensary, 1; patients treated, 405; collections, $272; total value of mission property, $30,115.

JAPAN MISSION CONFERENCE.

Our work was begun in this field in 1886 by Drs. J. W. and W. R. Lambuth and O. A. Dukes. The mission was organized into an Annual Conference in 1892. In this Annual Conference we have: Missionaries (including wives), 39; native traveling preachers, 11; members, 744; Sunday schools, 42; scholars, 1,654; Epworth Leagues, 2; members, 60; organized Churches, 15; Churches entirely self-supporting, 2; boarding schools, 2; pupils, 586; day schools, 8; pupils, 181; total collections, $1,245.17; total value of mission property, $62,694.

BRAZIL MISSION CONFERENCE.

Our missionary operations in Brazil had their commencement in 1872, when Rev. J. J. Ransom, our first missionary to that field, was sent out. The mission was organized into an Annual Conference in 1886. There are now in the Brazil Mission Conference: Missionaries (including wives), 28; native traveling

preachers, 19; members, 3,343; Sunday schools, 65; scholars, 2,370; Epworth Leagues, 7; members, 315; organized Churches, 48; Churches entirely self-supporting, 7; boarding school, 1; pupils, 53; day school, 1; pupils, 39; total collections, $7,301.38; total value of mission property, $115,338.

MEXICO.

In thirty years this mission has grown into three Annual Conferences. The combined statistics of the Central (organized in 1886), the Northwest (organized in 1890), and the Mexican Border (organized in 1885)—three Mission Conferences now in Mexico, which represent the fruits of incessant toil and heroic devotion for thirty years—are: Missionaries (including wives), 34; native traveling preachers, 53; members, 5,814 (increase, 106); Sunday schools, 116; scholars, 3,862; Epworth Leagues, 47; members, 1,545; organized Churches, 168; Churches entirely self-supporting, 5; boarding school, 1; pupils, 212; hospitals, 2; patients treated, 3,133; total collections, $5,180.30; total value of mission property, $167,107.08.

CUBA MISSION.

Our first work in Havana was organized in 1896, and in 1898 Cuba was taken under the

control of the Board as a regular mission field. We are establishing ourselves firmly on the island, as is shown by the erection of a substantial stone church in Matanzas and the purchase by Bishop Candler for $15,000 of a centrally located property in Havana well adapted for church and school purposes. The work has grown steadily, there being a marked increase over last year. Rev. D. W. Carter, superintendent of the mission, reports the following statistics: Missionaries (including wives), 14; native traveling preachers, 2; members, 454 (increase, 62); Sunday schools, 9; scholars, 552; Epworth Leagues, 3; organized Churches, 8; day schools, 3; pupils, 288; collections for all purposes, $2,884.57; total value of mission property, $40,000.

OTHER MISSIONS.

In addition to these six foreign mission fields occupied by our Church, we have a German Mission and an Indian Mission Conference, and our General Board of Missions to aid the work of our Church in the Pacific, the Los Angeles, the Columbia, the East Columbia, the Denver, the Montana, the Western, and the New Mexico Conferences.

OFFICERS OF THE BOARD.

The officers of the Board for the quadrennium beginning May, 1902, are as follows: Bishop A. W. Wilson, President; Rev. James Atkins, Vice President; Rev. Walter R. Lambuth, Secretary; Rev. Seth Ward, Assistant Secretary; J. D. Hamilton, Treasurer.

WOMAN'S BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

This Board was given its constitution in Atlanta, Ga., by the General Conference, in 1878. During the first year $4,104.27 was collected, but the service at home last year resulted in $104,017.95, making the total of $1,396,188 collected since organization. The Woman's Board supports 67 missionaries in the following countries: China, Korea, Brazil, Mexico, and Cuba. The women sent out occupy 29 stations, conduct 22 boarding schools and 61 day schools, and there are 170 native and foreign assistant teachers, 78 Bible women, 218 scholarships, 6 kindergartens, 2 hospitals, and 2 Bible schools. There are 567 boarding pupils, 1,008 day school pupils, with about five thousand women and children under instruction, about two thousand of whom are Sunday school pupils. The value of property owned by the Woman's Board of Foreign Mis-

sions, including the Scarritt Bible and Training School, is $401,500.

The officers of the Board are as follows: Mrs. M. D. Wightman, President; Miss Maria L. Gibson, First Vice President; Mrs. A. W. Wilson, Second Vice President; Mrs. S. C. Trueheart, Corresponding Secretary; Mrs. T. B. Hargrove, Recording Secretary; Mrs. H. N. McTyeire, Treasurer.

Woman's Home Mission Society.

The Woman's Home Mission Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, came into existence in 1886.

The object of this Society is to enlist Christian women and children in securing homes for itinerant preachers, in helping to make comfortable the families of those ministers whose charges are unable to provide sufficient support, and providing religious instruction for the neglected and destitute.

OFFICERS.

Miss Belle H. Bennett, Richmond, Ky., President; Mrs. John D. Hammond, Nashville, Tenn., First Vice President; Mrs. F. B. Carroll, Dallas, Tex., Second Vice President; Mrs. R. W. MacDonell, Nashville, Tenn., Gen-

eral Secretary; Miss Emily M. Allen, Macon, Ga., Recording Secretary; Mrs. W. D. Kirkland, Nashville, Tenn., General Treasurer.

STATISTICS.

Number of members, 29,034; receipts for connectional work, $269,935.11; receipts for local work, $456,010.55; total receipts, $725,945.66; number of parsonages built and aided, 1,265; money donated to parsonages, $117,284.23; money loaned to parsonages, $37,100; value of supplies distributed outside of receipts above stated, $44,921.06; number of boarding and day schools supported, 4; number of night schools supported, 5; number of pupils enrolled, 1,080; number of missionaries and teachers employed, 47; number of city mission boards, 9; number of Rescue Homes and Doors of Hope, 2; value of property, $69,000.

PARSONAGES.

During the year the Board granted $3,475 to 37 parsonages, while the Conference Societies, through their 50 per cent of dues, helped 92 to the amount of $6,424, thus making a total of 129 parsonages granted $9,899. Since organization 1,265 parsonages have been aided to the amount of $117,284.23.

SUPPLIES.

Last year goods valued at $8,136.54 were forwarded to the heroes who hold those fields known as the "hard appointments." In ten years $44,021.06 has been distributed through this department.

SCHOOLS.

Of no part of our work are we more hopeful than of these character-building institutions. The three schools for the Cubans at Tampa, Ybor City, and Key West have been filled by 403 scholars under the instruction of 14 teachers.

At London, Ky., the pupilage has been 265, and during the year 32 students have been converted. A large per cent of these students go out to become teachers in district schools, thus enlarging the influence of this school, known as the Sue Bennett Memorial School.

The Industrial Home and School at Greeneville, Tenn., under the direction of Mrs. E. E. Wiley, has given fostering care to 113 children during the year.

On the Pacific Coast the Society carries on night schools at Los Angeles, for Chinese; and at San Francisco, Oakland, and Alameda, for Japanese. Since the organization of these schools more than five hundred and fifty-nine

students have been enrolled, and full three score have become Christians.

At Augusta, Ga., in an annex to Paine College, the society has undertaken the industrial training of the young negro women who are enrolled as students.

Two schools among the Choctaw Indians of Mississippi have been opened.

Work has also been instituted in the mines of West Virginia.

CITY MISSIONS.

In eleven cities the auxiliaries are organized into City Mission Boards, employing trained missionaries. In Atlanta, Nashville, and Norfolk small beginnings have been made in settlement work, the missionaries living in needy sections, thus getting into the home life and close to the hearts of the people.

The Sunday School.

The Sunday school work is conducted for the double purpose of instructing the young in a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and of training them in the habits of Christian work.

In each congregation the Sunday school is under the management of the Quarterly Conference, which elects the superintendent an-

nually on nomination of the pastor, who is the superintendent in chief of all the schools within his pastoral charge. The pastor and superintendent together select the teachers and give direction to their work.

The Sunday School Department is under the management of the Sunday School Board, which consists of five members, and the Sunday School Editor, who is *ex officio* chairman. The Board is elected quadrennially by the General Conference. The members for the current quadrennium (1902–06) are as follows: James Atkins, D.D., Nashville, Tenn., Chairman; John O. Willson, D.D., Greenwood, S. C.; John R. Pepper, Memphis, Tenn.; B. M. Washburn, Montgomery, Ala., Secretary; B. M. Burgher, Dallas, Tex.; M. L. Walton, Woodstock, Va. D. M. Smith, Nashville, Tenn., is the Treasurer of the Board.

Statistics.—Number of schools, 14,396; officers and teachers, 103,476; scholars, 884,329. Total in schools, 987,805.

Literature.—Sunday School Magazine, 48,800; Senior Quarterly, 325,000; Intermediate Quarterly, 300,000; Home Department Quarterly, 9,300; Children's Visitor, 68,500; Illustrated Lesson Paper, 130,000; Our Little

People, 205,000; Olivet Picture Cards, sets, 70,000. Total circulation in 1902, 1,156,600.

Bible Teachers' Study Circle.—This department of training work was fully organized by the General Conference of 1902, and Dr. H. M. Hamill was elected by the Sunday School Board Superintendent of Training Work.

The course for teachers is as follows:

First Course: "History of Sunday Schools," by W. G. E. Cunnyngham, D.D.; "Bible Studies," by A. E. Dunning, D.D.; "The Sunday School Teacher," by H. M. Hamill, D.D.

Second Course: "Short History of Methodism," by J. W. Boswell, D.D.; "The Books of the Bible," by H. M. Hamill, D.D.; "The Doctrines and Polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South," by W. F. Tillett, D.D., and James Atkins, D.D.

There is a seventh book for superintendents and other officers—"The Organized Sunday School," by Axtell. On the completion of the first course a certificate is issued to each teacher who meets the required standard, and at the end of the second course a full diploma is awarded by the Sunday School Department.

The Sunday School and Missions.—By order of the General Conference, every Sunday school is a missionary society. The order of work is the setting apart of one Sunday in each month as missionary day, the collection on which goes to the use of the Board of Missions; and in October a Missionary Rally Day, with a collection for the same purpose. The Sunday schools are now raising an extra fund of $10,000 to endow a chair in the Soochow University. The amount raised by our schools for missions is now about $50,000 a year.

The amount raised on Children's Day for aiding destitute schools, and especially for helping Sunday schools in foreign mission fields, is about $15,000 per year.

The Board of Church Extension.

This Board was organized in 1882. The originator of it, and its Secretary to the time of his death, was Rev. David Morton, D.D.

The purpose of the Board is to aid in the purchase or securing of church lots, and the erection or securing of church buildings and parsonages. The office of the Board is located at Louisville, Ky.

Each Annual Conference has an auxiliary

of the Church Extension Board, which is entitled to retain and apply within the bounds of the Conference fifty per cent of all funds coming into its hands, the other fifty per cent passing to the Parent Board for administration. The Board has a loan fund of $200,000.

The General and Annual Conference Boards, since their organization, have aided 4,946 Churches, with $942.642 in gifts and $433,-645 in loans. West of the Mississippi 1,816 Churches have been helped; east of the Mississippi, 3,101; and in the mission fields, 29. Amount spent in helping Churches in mission fields, $21,532. Amount donated to Churches in the West by the General Board, $272,430; in the East, $148,437. The assessment on the Churches for the year 1902–03 is $125,460.

The officers of the Board are: Presley Meguiar, President, Louisville, Ky.; R. B. Gilbert, M.D., Vice President, Louisville, Ky.; Rev. P. H. Whisner, Corresponding Secretary, Louisville, Ky.; John Ouerbacker, Treasurer, Louisville, Ky.

The Epworth League.

Acting on a memorial submitted by the Church Conference of Trinity Church, Los

Angeles, Cal., the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at its meeting in the city of St. Louis, in May, 1890, ordered the foundation, under the direction of the Sunday School Department, of Young People's Leagues "for the promotion of piety and loyalty to the Church." This was the organic beginning of the Epworth League in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, which was the first of the great bodies of Christendom to make its young people's organization a part of its corporate life. Since its reorganization, in 1894, as a separate department of connectional work, the Epworth League has chartered 5,839 Senior and 866 Junior Chapters.

The several departments of League work are in healthy condition. About 6,000 volumes are annually circulated in its Reading Courses. The General Minutes of the Church credit to it between $50,000 and $75,000 contributed to the causes of the Church. The most considerable of these contributions is made to the cause of missions. The *Epworth Era*, published at Nashville, Tenn., is the organ of the League. The year just closed has been the most prosperous in the history of the organization.

The officers of the General Epworth League Board are: Bishop W. A. Candler, President, Atlanta, Ga.; and H. M. Du Bose, D.D., General Secretary.

The Board of Education.

The Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was established by the General Conference at Memphis, in May, 1894.

During its existence of eight years the Board has organized and is now operating a teachers' bureau; raised $25,000 for a new building at Paine Institute, known as "Haygood Memorial Hall;" stimulated the Annual Conferences to lift their assessments for education from a total of $70,750 in 1897 to a total of $93,160 in 1901; conducted a campaign which resulted in a thank offering for education amounting to more than $1,500,000; secured a better classification of our institutions, and their more harmonious adjustment in a system.

Statistics.—The latest report of the Board shows that the Church has one university, 18 colleges, 103 secondary schools, 8 affiliated schools, and 64 mission schools of all grades, domestic and foreign. In connection with

the Biblical Department of Vanderbilt University and under the direction of its faculty, the Board has also recently established a Correspondence School for ministers which is now in successful operation, with an enrollment of nearly one hundred and fifty pupils.

The officers of the Board are as follows: Bishop C. B. Galloway, President; Bishop E. R. Hendrix, Vice President; Chancellor J. H. Kirkland, Recording Secretary; Rev. J. D. Hammond, Corresponding Secretary.

The Treasurer of the Board is Mr. D. M. Smith, Nashville, Tenn.

STATISTICS OF METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH, 1901.

Pastoral charges	5,037
Number of societies	17,898
Traveling preachers	6,293
Local preachers	4,982
Members	1,505,241
Total membership	1,516,516

Value of Publishing House, less all liabilities, $926,094.53.

Combined circulation of periodicals issued by the House, 1,156,600 copies.

The Agents for the House for 1902–06 are Messrs. Bigham and Smith, Nashville, Tenn.